

The Oxford & Cambridge Edition.

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SHAKESPEARE'S  
**HAMLET,**  
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

BY  
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AND  
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## EDITORIAL.

THIS Edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is designed to satisfy the requirements of Candidates for all Public Examinations, and is distinguished from the majority of School Editions by certain special features, the purpose of which may be briefly indicated.

The work consists of three sections, the first containing the necessary introductory matter and sketches of the characters of the play; the second, the text of the Play with brief notes; the third section contains fuller additional notes, grammatical explanations, versification, classical allusions, glossary and examination papers.

The Literary Introduction contains separate sections upon all subjects in connection with the Play, together with sketches of the characters in the Play, upon which Examiners are in the habit of framing questions. The study of this portion of the book may be deferred until a general knowledge of the Play has been acquired by the Student, whilst the paragraphs printed in small type may be omitted altogether by the Candidate for Elementary Examinations.

The Life of Shakespeare has been included, not only because it is likely to be of interest to the general reader, but also because a knowledge of the principal events in the poet's life is frequently required by Examining bodies in connection with the study of any particular play.

The Marginal and Foot Notes are intended to suffice for the needs of Junior Students, and are printed in conjunction with the text. The Editors have found by experience that such an arrangement conduces to a thorough knowledge and understanding of the text much more readily than when the young Student is expected to turn to the end of the book, in the case of every difficulty that presents itself.

The Additional Notes are intended mainly for Senior Students, and may be studied apart from the text. Junior Students, who desire to attain distinction in any Examination, or such as possess a natural taste for literary subjects, may also refer profitably to this Section.

Shakespearean Grammar has been treated at some length in as simple a manner as is consistent with the subject. Illustrative passages from the Play have been quoted in full in order that the Student may be saved the tedious labour of continually referring back to the text.

Classical Names and Glossary will be referred to as necessity arises during the study of the Play. In the case of these, as in that of the Grammar, illustrative passages are quoted in full. Thus, for the purposes of revision, these Sections may be studied apart from the text.

Examination Papers are given at the end of the book. As these are based upon the model of the papers set at Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations, they should prove specially serviceable where Candidates for such Examinations have to be considered.

The obligation of the Authors to the authorities consulted in the preparation of this Edition has almost always been recorded in the pages of the work.

STANLEY WOOD.  
F. MARSHALL.

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SHAKESPEARE'S HOUSE, STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

## NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE.

### Birth and Parentage.

In this short account of the Life of William Shakespeare, we shall endeavour to confine ourselves to well-authenticated facts, and shall therefore say nothing about supposed ancestry, especially as the name of Shakespeare seems to have been very common in the Middle Ages in many parts of England. There is, however, good reason for supposing that William Shakespeare's ancestors were farmers. The poet's father, John Shakespeare, appears to have been in early life not only a prosperous man of business in many branches, but a person of importance in the municipal affairs of Stratford. He held for one year "the highest office in the Corporation gift, that of bailiff"; he afterwards became chief alderman. He married Mary Arden, who brought him land and houses, but "was apparently without education"; several extant documents bear her mark, and there is no proof that she could sign her name. William, their third and eldest surviving child, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in April, 1564. His father was then in prosperous circumstances, and when, in July of that year, the plague raged violently at Stratford, he subscribed liberally to the relief of the victims among the poor. In a few years, however, he fell into debt and difficulties, was obliged to mortgage his wife's property, and gradually lost his interest in municipal affairs.

## ii. NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE.

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### Childhood and Youth.

In the meantime five children—three boys and two girls younger than William—began to require education. The boys “were entitled to free tuition at the Grammar School of Stratford,” where they were taught the rudiments of Latin, grammar and literature, and to write in Old English characters, as was then the custom in provincial schools. In later life William Shakespeare acquired some knowledge of the French language (of which he made use in the Play of *Henry V*). His time at school was short, as his father's fortunes steadily declined, and at the age of thirteen he was obliged to apply himself to the trade of a butcher, which was then the only means by which his father earned his living.

### His Marriage.

At a short distance from Stratford stands a thatched cottage, still known by the name of Anne Hathaway's Cottage, and inhabited by descendants of the Hathaways until 1838. It is said to be only a part of the homestead where Anne's father, Richard Hathaway, died in fairly prosperous circumstances, leaving a farm which had belonged to his family for generations to be carried on by his widow and eldest son. Each daughter was to receive for her marriage portion the modest sum of £6 13s. 4d., which in those days was equal to £53 6s. 8d. at the present time, just an eighth of the present value.

Anne Hathaway became the wife of William Shakespeare when he was little more than eighteen and a half years old, she having attained the more mature age of twenty-six. History says little of their early married life, and that little does not point to happiness. Three children were born to them, two daughters and a son.

### Early Life at Stratford

Although we are told :

“Anne Hathaway, she hath a way,  
To charm all hearts, Anne Hathaway,”

she was not able to keep her young husband out of mischief. In the absence of sufficient means of livelihood, he seems to have amused himself among his farmer kinsfolk, and not content with the orthodox sports common to those born and bred in the country, appears to have taken up with bad companions, and to have been led into poaching transactions, which caused him in the end to leave his home and family for several years. More than once he was known to join with others in stealing deer and rabbits from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, for which the punishment in those days was three months' imprisonment, and the payment of three times the amount of damage done. Shakespeare bitterly resented the treatment meted out to him, and in revenge composed a ballad on the subject, which he posted up on the gates of Charlecote Park. This, not unnaturally, had the effect of inciting Sir Thomas to further prosecution, and led to Shakespeare's forsaking his home and finding a more congenial occupation in London (1585).

**Life in London.**

There are various reports of the manner in which Shakespeare first tried to make a living on his arrival in London, but he soon drifted into the profession of an actor, in which he made his earliest reputation. He is said to have begun his career as a writer by adapting and re-writing plays by other authors, which, after being bought by an acting company, passed entirely out of the hands of the original playwright. It was not unusual for the manager to invite thorough revision before producing a new or revived play upon the stage. *Love's Labour Lost*, which is commonly supposed to be the first of his dramatic productions, and which may have been composed in 1591, was revised in 1597, and published the following year, when the name of Shakespeare first appeared in print as its author. Its plot, unlike those of most of his plays, does not seem to have been borrowed from any earlier story or romance. *Romeo and Juliet* (1591-3), his first tragedy, on the contrary, had gone through many adaptations since the Greek romance of "Anthia and Abrocomas" was written in the second century. The story had been told both in prose and verse, and was popular throughout Europe. For the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* (1594?) he was indebted to a variety of sources, including a collection of Italian novels written in the fourteenth century. Most of Shakespeare's dramatic work was probably done in twenty years, between his twenty-seventh and forty-seventh year, at the rate of an average of two plays a year.

**His Patrons.**

One patron he had among the nobility, the Earl of Southampton, to whom many of his sonnets are unmistakably addressed, though not by name. Queen Elizabeth showed him some marks of her favour as early as 1594, and after the accession of James I. he was called upon to act before the king. *The Tempest*, which was probably the latest effort of his genius, was performed to celebrate the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with the Elector Frederick, in 1613.

**His Return to Stratford.**

In middle life he developed much good sense and ability in practical affairs. With the object of re-establishing the fortunes of his family in the town of Stratford, he returned thither after an absence of nearly eleven years, and although he spent the greater part of his time in London, he never failed to visit his native place at least once a year. In 1597 he purchased, for £60, the largest house in the town, along with two barns and two gardens, repaired the house, which was much dilapidated, and interested himself much in the gardens and orchard. The purchase of this house, "New Place" by name, for a sum now equalling £480, brought to Shakespeare a reputation among his fellow townsmen for wealth and influence, which was further increased when he applied for, through his father, and duly received, the distinction of a coat of arms. Both as actor and dramatist he was now receiving a good income, and in 1599, when the Globe Theatre was built, he acquired a share in its profits also. His average annual income before that date is computed at more than £130, equal to £1,040 at the present time. Afterwards his income, from various sources, became much larger, and

#### iv. NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE.

he became the owner of a large landed estate. He appears to have been fond of litigation, in which, however, he was generally successful.

##### His last years.

In this time of prosperity he brought out several of his best plays. The comedies, *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600), *As You Like It* (1600), and *Twelfth Night* (1601), were followed by *Julius Cæsar*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. *Macbeth* was completed in 1606, and succeeded by *King Lear*, which was played before the Court at Whitehall, on the night of December 26th, 1606. After 1611 he seems to have abandoned dramatic composition, and spent the greater part of his time at Stratford. His health began to fail at the commencement of 1616, but the actual cause of death is unknown. His only son, Hamnet,



TRINITY CHURCH, STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

had died many years before, but his wife and two daughters, Susannah Hall and Judith Quiney, survived him. He died at the age of fifty-two, and was buried inside the chancel of Stratford Church, with this epitaph inscribed over his grave:—

“ Good Friend, for Jesus' sake forbear  
To dig the dvst enclosed heare,  
Blest be ye man yt spares thes stones,  
And cvrst be he yt moves my bones.”

[For the facts contained in the above account of Shakespeare's life I have relied principally upon the authority of Sidney Lee, to whose “ LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE ” (Macmillan) I would refer all students who desire to acquaint themselves with “ the net results of trustworthy research respecting Shakespeare's life and writing.”—ED.]



# HAMLET,

## PRINCE OF DENMARK.

### SOURCE OF THE PLOT OF THE PLAY.

**Saxo Grammaticus**, a Danish writer, a native of Elsinore, about 1208, wrote *Historica Danica*, a Latin history of Denmark.

The Legend of Amleth or Hamlet appears in the third and fourth books, and is taken from the Icelandic "*Saga of Danish Kings*."

The earliest edition of *Historica Danica* was printed in Paris in 1514.

**Belleforest**, a French writer, published his *Histories Tragiques* translated from the Italian. The legend of Amleth is contained in the fifth volume issued in 1570, and printed at Paris.

**The Hystorie of Hamblet**, an English translation of Belleforest's *Amleth*, of which the earliest known edition was published in 1608. •

There are points of difference in the three works, e.g.

In Saxo the councillor hides himself "in the straw on the floor."

In Belleforest he conceals himself under a quilt.

In the Hystorie he places himself behind the "hangings" or "arras," as in Shakespeare's play. We also find the exclamation "*a rat—a rat*," uttered by Hamlet as he stabs the hidden politician.

The main outlines of the Story in Saxo reproduced in the Play.

- (1) Two brothers, Horvendile and Fengon, appointed by Roderick, king of Denmark, over two provinces of his kingdom = Hamlet's father and Hamlet's uncle.
- (2) Horvendile won great renown as a Vi-king, and slew Collin, king of Norway, in single combat = the Fortinbras of Norway (father of the Fortinbras of the play), slain by Hamlet's father (Act. I. i. 86, etc.).



## SOURCE OF THE PLOT.

- (3) Roderick received a large share of the spoil, and gave Horvendile his daughter Geruth in marriage=Gertrude, the queen in the play.
- (4) They have a son Amleth=Hamlet in the play.
- (5) Fengon loves Geruth and wins her affection. He murders his brother, marries Geruth, and obtains the rule over both provinces. Compare the murder of Hamlet's father by his uncle and his marriage to Queen Gertrude.
- (6) Amleth feigns madness to save his life, as Hamlet does in the play.
- (7) Plots are laid to test if the madness be real or feigned.
  - (a) An interview with an unnamed maiden in a wood, from which Amleth escapes through being warned by an unnamed friend. Compare Polonius' attempt to discover Hamlet's disposition through Ophelia.
  - (b) An interview with his mother, when a certain councillor hides behind the hangings to listen to the conversation. Amleth is suspicious of his presence and pierces the hangings with the cry of "*a rat—a rat*," and kills the councillor. Compare the death of Polonius.
- (8) Fengon desiring to get rid of Amleth sends him to Britain with two of his servants. These servants are entrusted with secret letters desiring the King of Britain to slay Amleth. On the voyage Amleth reads the letters, and alters them so that the servants are hanged by the King of Britain. Compare Hamlet's voyage to Britain, his substitution for the letters and his escape.
- (9) The conclusion is different from that in the play. In the story Amleth returns to find his own funeral feast being celebrated. Still feigning madness he sets fire to the castle, kills the king, reveals the reason for his having feigned madness, and ascends the throne.
- (10) Horatio, in the story, is represented by an unnamed friend. Ophelia by an unnamed maiden loving Amleth, and loved by him.
 

But all the names are different except Amleth (=Hamlet) and Geruth (=Gertrude).

How far was Shakespeare indebted to these sources?

The only one of the above sources available to Shakespeare was Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. But the legend was well-known, and appears to have been embodied in previous plays (see page v.), from which Shakespeare may have gathered materials for the framework of his plot.

But the characters and all that makes the greatness of the play of Hamlet are Shakespeare's own.

## PREVIOUS PLAYS.

1587 and 1589. We have an allusion to a previous play in Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, printed 1587 (according to Dyce), but of which the earliest known copy is dated 1589. In the preface written by Thomas Nash, there is the following passage. "Yet English *Seneca* read by candlelight yeeldes manie good sentences, as 'Bloud is a beggar,' and so forth: and if you intreate him faire on a frostie morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfulls of tragical speaches."

The preceding part of the preface is an attack upon translators.

1594. June 9th. In the diary of Henslowe, a theatrical manager of the day, there is an entry of the performance of a play styled *Hamlet*, at the theatre of Newington Butts.

1596. Thomas Lodge, in his *Wils Miserie*, describes "a devil Hate-Vertue," or "sorrow for another man's good success," who "looks as pale as the Vizard of ye Ghost, which cried so miserally at ye Theator like an oister wife, '*Hamlet revenge*.'"

Many critics are inclined to consider this play as the work of Thomas Kyd. Kyd was one of the Lord Chamberlain's players.

The principal arguments in favour of Kyd's authorship are:

- (1) That he had written a play entitled *The Spanish Tragedy*, the style of which corresponds to the descriptions given above of the Play referred to by Greene, Henslowe and Lodge.
- (2) That Kyd's knowledge of French would enable him to use Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* in the original.

EARLY EDITIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY  
OF HAMLET.

1602. July 26th. James Roberts, the printer, entered upon the register of the Stationers' Company "*A booke, The revenge of Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke, as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberlayne his servantes.*"

1603. The First Quarto (Q<sub>1</sub>). Entered on the register of the Stationers' Company with this title:—"The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. As it hath been diverse times acted by his Highnesse servantes in the cittie of London; as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where."

1604. The Second Quarto (Q<sub>2</sub>). An enlarged edition with the title:—"The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copie."

The names of the printers of  $Q_1$  and  $Q_2$  are as follows :—

$Q_1$ . For Nicholas Ling and John Trundell.

$Q_2$ . By James Roberts for Nicholas Ling.

Thus it would appear that the editions of 1602—1604, were printed by James Roberts (see p. vii.).

$Q_1$  (The First Quarto) consists of 32 pages, 2,143 lines.

$Q_2$  (The Second Quarto) consists of 50 pages, 3,719 lines.

1605. The Third Quarto ( $Q_3$ ).

1611. The Fourth Quarto ( $Q_4$ ).

The Fifth Quarto ( $Q_5$ ) undated, but published in Shakespeare's lifetime, and evidently printed from  $Q_4$  (1611).

1637. The Sixth Quarto ( $Q_6$ ).

1623. The First Folio ( $F_1$ ), an edition of the collected plays, containing Hamlet as the seventh play, which is generally regarded as the play modified for stage purposes, and as it was acted under Shakespeare's direction.

The text of the play is now a combination of  $Q_2$  and  $F_1$ .

$Q_1$  alone gives—

(1) The passage on Julius Caesar (I. i 112-125).

(2) Hamlet's speech on drunkenness (I. iv 17-38).

(3) Hamlet's remarks on the sealed letters, and his determination to thwart the bearers, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (III. iv. 202-211).

(4) The soliloquy (IV. iv. 32-66).

(5) The urging on of Laertes to take action by Claudius (IV. vii. 113-125).

(6) The main part of the conversation with Osric (V. ii. 81-184).

$Q_2$  omits the passage referring to child-actors (II. ii. 339-352), which is found in  $F_1$ .

In the preface to the First Folio (1623) reference is made to "stolen and surreptitious copies."

$Q_1$  seems to have been one of these pirated editions, and may have been produced from notes taken during the representation of the play.

It differs materially from  $Q_2$ , the authorised edition.

(1) In Names. The Players are not King and Queen, but Duke and Duchess. Polonius is "*Corambis*," Reynaldo "*Montano*," and Gonzago "*Albertus*."

(2) In Characters. The madness of Hamlet is more marked. The guilt of the King is put forward more strongly.

The Queen is innocent of her husband's murder.

In addition many proper names are spelt incorrectly, e.g., Plato for Plautus. Certain speeches are assigned to different characters. Prose passages are written in verse, and the metre is faulty.

Many theories have been put forward as regards this Quarto.

- (1) That it is the text of a play, not written by Shakespeare.
- (2) That it is a pirated edition of Shakespeare's play.
- (3) That it is Shakespeare's own work, which he improved upon in the form of the Second Quarto.

The Cambridge editors give as their view "That there was an old play on the story of Hamlet, some portions of which are still preserved in the quarto of 1603 ( $Q_1$ ); that about the year 1603 Shakespeare took this and began to remodel it for the stage as he had done with other plays; that the quarto of 1603 ( $Q_1$ ) represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his alterations were complete; and that in the quarto of 1604 we have for the first time the Hamlet of Shakespeare."

### DATE OF THE PLAY.

We have two means of arriving at a probable date when any particular play was written.

#### I. External evidence.

- (a) Date of entry on the Register of the Stationers' Company.
- (b) Is the Play included in the Folios or Quartos?
- (c) Are there any allusions to the Play by contemporaneous writers?

#### II. Internal evidence.

- (a) Are there any allusions in the Play to contemporaneous events?
- (b) An examination of the language and metre of the Play,

For the date of Hamlet we have the following evidence:—

##### 1. External.

Not before 1598, for there is no mention of Hamlet in the list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* or *Wit's Treasury*, published in 1598.

Not later than 1602, if  $Q_1$  refer to Shakespeare's Hamlet (see p. vii.), and certainly not later than 1604, the date of  $Q_2$ , the first authorised edition of the play.

##### 2. Internal.

- The players in Act II. Sc. 2 are "*the tragedians of the city*," and two causes are assigned why they are travelling:—

- (1) "*An inhibition*" by reason of the "*late innovation*."
- (2) Another company, an "*aiery of children*" had ousted them from popular favour.

The use made of the stage by the Earl of Essex to present a play representing the deposition of a monarch had resulted in the inhibition of the Chamberlain's company in 1601.

So it is most probable that Shakespeare made his first sketch of the play in 1601.

## ANACHRONISMS.

An Anachronism—an error in dating. So when a writer assigns an event to a date to which it cannot belong, he is said to commit an *anachronism*.

The date of the action of the Play is not defined, but it is represented as being during the period of the Danish invasions of England.

Consequently the following must be *anachronisms* :—

1. The use of cannon. Firearms were not in use till the fourteenth century.
2. Switzers, as the King's body-guard. Shakespeare is thinking of the Swiss soldiers who formed the body-guard of the French kings.
3. The University at Wittenberg. This University was not founded till 1502.
4. Theatrical customs, especially the inhibition of the players, and the employment of child actors. These customs, as in the play, are all based upon the dramatic forms of Shakespeare's day.
5. The wearing of chopines. This was a fashion common amongst the ladies of Venice.
6. Barbary horses. These were not imported into Europe till the sixteenth century.
7. Crowner's quest. The coroner is a Norman official, and dates from the Norman times.
8. Coaches. Ophelia calls for her coach (IV. v. 64). Coaches did not come into use till the sixteenth century.

## THE UNITIES.

The Unities are three in number, viz., Time, Place and Action.

Time. The time taken in the representation of the play must coincide with that of the action of the play.

Place. No scene of the play must be so located that the *dramatis personae* shall be unable to visit it in the time allotted for the performance of the play.

Action. All characters must contribute to the action of the play, i.e., no unnecessary characters should be introduced.

All scenes must contribute to the action of the play, i.e., no unnecessary scenes should be introduced.

The Unity of Action is the only Unity observed in *Hamlet*.

*The Tempest* and *The Comedy of Errors* are examples of Shakespeare's plays in which all the Unities are observed.

## SCENE OF THE PLAY.

At Elsinore or Helsingör, a town on the island of Zealand, where all vessels passing through the Sound had to stop and pay Sound duties.

The "Castle" is the castle of Kronberg, built by Frederick II.

## DURATION OF THE PLAY.

Day 1.—Act I., sc. i. ii. iii.

Day 2.—Act I., sc. iv. v.

There is a considerable interval between Acts I. and II., which has been put down as two months for (I) Hamlet speaks of his father "*But two months dead*" (I. ii. 138), whilst Ophelia says "*Nay, 'tis twice two months*" (III. ii. 119). This gives an interval of two months.

Such an interval would give time—

(1) For money to be sent to Laertes. "*Give this money and these notes, Reynaldo*" (II. i. 1).

(2) The return of the Ambassadors from Norway.

Their departure is mentioned (I. ii. 33-34), and their return (II. ii. 40).

Day 3.—Act II., sc. i. ii.

Day 4.—Act III., sc. i. ii. iii. iv. Act IV., sc. i. ii. iii.

Day 5.—Act IV., sc. iv.

An interval which it is impossible to estimate. Shakespeare seems to have overlooked the fact that Hamlet's sudden return is irreconcilable with the return of the Ambassadors from England the day after his own return.

We have—

(1) The return of Hamlet, "*sudden and more strange*," for which a week is sufficient if not, indeed, too long. He had sailed two days on the voyage to England and returned immediately and unexpectedly.

(2) The return of the Ambassadors from England. They had set out with Hamlet, and had gone to England. Yet they return the day after Hamlet's arrival.

(3) The return of Laertes from Paris.

(4) The return of Fortinbras. We must assign sufficient time for him to have marched to Poland, to have won his victory, and to have returned.

Nearly the sudden return of Hamlet cannot be fitted in with the time required by Laertes, the Ambassadors and Fortinbras.

• Critics differ from the space of a week to the extent of two months.

Day 6.—Act IV., sc. v. vi. vii.

Day 7.—Act V., sc. i. ii.

**Seasons.** The opening scene cannot have been later than March "*'Tis bitter cold*" (I. i. 8).

The flowers gathered by Ophelia must have been plucked late in May or early in June. This incident gives the time of the later scenes.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAY.

"To the common public 'Hamlet' is a famous piece by a famous poet, with crime, a ghost, battle, and carnage; and that is sufficient. To the youthful enthusiast 'Hamlet' is a piece handling the mystery of the universe, and having throughout cadences, phrases, and words full of the divinest Shakespearian magic; and that too is sufficient. To the pedant, finally, 'Hamlet' is an occasion for airing his psychology; and what does pedant require more? But to the spectator who loves true and powerful drama, and can judge whether he gets it or not, 'Hamlet' is a piece which opens, indeed, simply and admirably and then; 'The rest is puzzle!' . . . . . 'Hamlet' thus comes at last to be not a drama followed with perfect comprehension and profoundest emotion, which is the ideal for tragedy but a problem soliciting interpretation and solution. It will never, therefore, be a piece to be seen with pure satisfaction by those who will not deceive themselves. But such is its power and such is its fame that it will always continue to be acted and we shall all of us continue to go and see it."—*Matthews Arnold, in the Pall Mall Gazette.*

"If the principles that are fought out in this drama, in tragic conflict, were to be described by catchwords, we might say: Reason stands against Dogma; Nature against Tradition. Self-Reliance against Submission. The great elementary forces are here at issue which the Reformation had unchained, and with which we all have to reckon."—*Jacob Feis, Shakespeare and Montaigne.*

### CHARACTER INTERPRETATION.

The following simple rules are intended to guide students of the play to form their own estimate of the various characters, a much more useful and interesting process than that of merely committing to memory the opinions of others.

- (1) In judging of the character of any of the *dramatis personæ* take into account all that is said of him in the play by others. Hamlet himself will assist you to frame for yourself a general conception of almost every other character in the play.
- (2) In estimating a person's character by what he himself says, note attentively the circumstances under which his speeches are made. Soliloquy is the form in which most of the clues to the interpretation of Hamlet's character are conveyed. In conversation with other characters he often, of set purpose, misrepresents himself.
- (3) Do not interpret character by single incidents. Many details must be collected and looked upon in the light

of the general view. Polonius must not be regarded as a sage because he gives wise counsel to Laertes. Compare his speeches with his actions. It will be found that, as Goethe says, he speaks like a book, when he is prepared beforehand; and like an ass, when he utters the overflowings of his heart.

- (4) Watch the development of character as time progresses. Frame for yourself a general idea of what each character may have been before the period of the play, and observe the effect of circumstances and surroundings upon that character. Adversity is a touchstone of character. Hamlet would have presented a very different figure in the world if he had not had a duty imposed upon him for the performance of which he was by nature unfitted.
- (5) Observe carefully all contrasts. Shakespeare generally adds to the interest of his characterisation by contrast or by duplication. Laertes and Fortinbras are both placed in strongest contrast to Hamlet. Horatio forms a contrast to almost all the other characters of the play. Hamlet himself exhibits to us, the contrast between his father and his step-father.
- (6) Finally read over very carefully, and act upon these cautions and hints given by Coleridge. "If you take only what the friends of the character say, you may be deceived, and still more so, if that which his enemies say; nay, even the character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, and not exactly as he is. Take all together, not omitting a shrewd hint from the clown or the fool, and perhaps your impression will be right; and you may know whether you have in fact discovered the poet's own idea, by *all the speeches receiving light from it, and altering its reality by reflecting it.*"

Shakespeare "clothed the creatures of his legend with form and sentiments, as if they were people who had lived under his roof; and few real men have left such distinct characters as these fictions."—*Emerson*.

"It is common for people to talk of Shakespeare's plays being so natural, that everybody can understand him. They are natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us."—*Lamb*.

"We talk of Shakespeare's admirable observation of life, when we should feel that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and every-day characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very 'sphere of humanity,' he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our nature the whole."—*Lamb*.



#### iv. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

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##### THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

###### CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

Prominent among the characteristics of this poisoner and smiling villain is—

**His Hypocrisy.** He can speak of the king, whom he has murdered, as "Hamlet, our dear brother," for whom he and his kingdom grieve "in one brow of woe"; he can speak of the affection he bears towards the Prince whom he has deprived of his lawful succession to the throne.

*"And with no less nobility of love  
Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
Do I impart toward you."* (I. ii. 110).

In order to keep him under surveillance, he begs him to remain.

*"Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son."* (I. ii. 116).

Whilst in the act of making arrangements for Hamlet's murder he affects a tender regard for his "especial safety"

*"Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve  
For that which thou hast done."* (IV. iii. 42-43).

As many of his speeches give evidence of the blackest hypocrisy, so his actions, as might be expected from—

**A Crafty Double-minded Schemer,** are most often deep-laid plots. He sets spies on Hamlet's movements, and even plays the spy himself. With acuteness and cunning, which he describes as "majesty and skill," he "handles the threatening Laertes, and strives on all occasions to avert suspicion from himself. "To bear all smooth and even," is his continual thought; hence, speaking of Hamlet's "mission" to England, he says,

*"This sudden sending him away must seem  
Deliberate pause!"* (IV. iii. 8)

But all his craft avails him nothing, for his best laid schemes fail. The death of Polonius and his interment "in hugger-mugger" result in the people becoming "muddled."

*"Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and  
whispers."* (IV. v. 73).

And these whispers, "as level as the cannon to his black" make the king their mark

**His Suspicious Nature.** Suspicion that "ever haunts the guilty soul," naturally finds a ready lodging in the mind of Claudius. From the first he regards the "lunacy" of Hamlet as "dangerous." After playing the spy he becomes assured that love is not the cause of his madness.

*"There's something in his soul,  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;  
And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose,  
Will be some danger."* (III. i. 162-165).

Being seized with what his flatterers call, "most holy and religious fear," he sends the Prince to England, giving as his reason that,

*"The terms of our estate may not endure,  
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow  
Out of his lunacies."* (III. iii. 5-7).

He harps unceasingly upon this fear. He suspects that the blow that struck Polonius down was aimed at himself.

*"It had been so with us, had we been there."* (IV. i. 13).

He communes with himself: "How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!" and, demanding Hamlet's death at the hands of the King of England, lays bare his wretched soul.

*"For like the hectic in my blood he rages,  
And thou must cure me; till I know 'tis done,  
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun."* (IV. iii. 67-69).

**His Conscience.** To speak of the conscience of one whose hand is "thicker than itself with brother's blood," and whose heart depends on "springs of steel," may appear to be a perversion of the use of the word, but Shakespeare, knowing that no man was ever utterly and irretrievably lost to all sense of right, has in accordance with nature represented Claudius as being the possessor of a conscience which could at least suffer remorse. There is no reason for supposing that he did not in his fashion, love the queen, though practice in knavery enabled him to conceal his feelings at her death. Hamlet's device to "catch the conscience of the king" was successful, and Polonius unwittingly attains a similar result.

*"How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!"* (III. i. 50).

More than once he wished the deed undone, but only on an impossible condition. He asks most pertinently,

*"May one be pardoned and retain the offence?"* (III. iii. 56).

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He is fully conscious of the two-fold efficacy of prayer, yet he cannot pray; neither can he repent.

*"Try what repentance can; what can it not?  
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?"*

(III. iii. 65-66).

Thus he palters with his conscience, and his state of mind is truly wretched. Punishment, proportionate to his crimes, overtakes him while yet alive, and, says he "like to a murdering-piece in many places, gives me superfluous death."

He is **Coarse-minded**, licentious, drunken. Hamlet contrasts his own father with Claudius, "Hyperion to a satyr," and in another place speaks of the latter as "a mildew'd ear, blasting his wholesome brother." He describes the "heavy-headed revel" in which the king takes the leading part:

*"The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring rears:  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge."*

(I. iv. 8-13).

The ghost of the murdered Hamlet describes him as,

*"That incestuous, that adulterate beast,"*

and Hamlet himself can find no epithet strong enough to express his loathing. In his opinion he is "a murderer and a villain," "a vice of kings."

*"A culpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,  
And put it in his pocket."*

(III. iv. 99-101).

"A king of shreds and patches," a "bloat king," "a paddock," "a bat, a gib." He is filled with amazement that a man so plausible can be so wicked, and turning his thoughts to generalisation, as is his wont, marvels

*"That one can smile, and smile and be a villain."*

(I. v. 92).

As a King he is not altogether despicable. He is energetic, eager to conciliate and specious. Fortinbras, "holding a weak supposal of his worth," finds that he is not to be contemned. With regard to Hamlet, he acts "with quick determination," sending him to England with all possible despatch. He could be resourceful and brave in an emergency, and maintained his composure in the face of Laertes' "giant-like rebellion."

*"Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would."*

(IV. v. 110-112).

"The king himself is a mass of deception and hypocrisy; he is a practised actor, and the perfect master of his looks and movements, and of all his words and actions; his guilty designs are supported in every case by maturely-weighed and well-contrived plans."—*Ulrich*.

"No inward virtues adorn the hypocritical 'laughing villain'; unless it be that quick perception of his understanding and of his guilty conscience, which makes him attentive to every danger and threat, which makes him interpret every event, every word, every sigh, which makes him gather round him with skilful grasp the weakest spies and tools."—*Gervinus*.

THE QUEEN is the instrument, by means of which crime is performed, rather than a criminal herself. She is

A Weak Woman, but not consciously wicked or depraved. She is "seeming-virtuous," and no doubt had deceived herself till she came to imagine herself a very pattern of virtue. She succumbed readily to the wiles and cozenage of Claudius, and so gave rise to Hamlet's reflection upon the sex, "Frailty, thy name is woman." She consented to a too brief widowhood, although her own better feeling told her that her second marriage was "over-hasty," and she weakly allowed herself to be made a tool of by both Claudius and Polonius. Not until Hamlet sets up a glass wherein she may see her inmost part, does she become fully aware of the shamelessness of her actions. Then she sees within her soul

"Such black and grained spots  
As will not leave their tinct." (III. iv. 90),

and henceforth leans upon her son rather than her husband, and does what she can to repair the wrong she has committed.

She is Emotional, illustrating in herself the truth of the Player's maxim that

"Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament."  
(III. ii. 185).

Her emotion however is neither deep-seated nor lasting. She mourned the loss of her first most excellent husband, "like Niobe, all tears," but "within a month,"

"Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears,  
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
She married." (I. ii. 154-156).

She loves her son more than anything else; "lives almost by his looks," but her love, selfish rather than sympathetic, was not such as might enable her to understand him. When Hamlet turned her eyes into her very soul the violence of her remorse and her amazement at the strange behaviour of her son almost drove her mad, so that she

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Ghost was constrained to bid Hamlet "step between her and her fighting soul," reminding him that

*"Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works."*

(III. iv. 114).

After Hamlet had exhibited her crimes to her in their true colours, her sins prey upon her mind, and to her "sick soul"

*"Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss."*

(IV. v. 18).

**Was she Privy to her Husband's Murder?** The play affords no evidence that she connived at the murder of her husband by Claudius. On the contrary all the evidence points to the fact that her first knowledge of the crime came from Hamlet. Her surprise at the charge of killing a king was not feigned, and her conscience was not touched, as Claudius' was during the representation of the Interlude. Moreover, the ghost of her first husband appeared to retain some affection for her, and had warned Hamlet not to taint his mind or let his soul contrive aught against her. Finally, we must remember that when once she was made aware of the manner of her husband's death she took the part of Hamlet against Claudius, from whom she hid henceforth all her "dear concernings."

"The affection of the wicked queen for this gentle and innocent creature (Ophelia) is one of those beautiful and redeeming touches, one of those penetrating glances into the secret springs of natural and feminine feeling, which we find only in Shakespeare."—*Mrs. Jameson*.

"The timid, self-indulgent, sensuous, sentimental queen is as remote from true woman's virtue as Claudius is from the virtues of royal manhood."—*Dowden*.

"In the queen we discern the confidence of a guilty mind, that by the artifice of self-deceit, has put to silence the upbraidings of conscience."—*Richardson*.

**HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.**

In our analysis of the character of Hamlet, and in our endeavour to discover his springs of action, or the causes of his want of action, we shall pursue our researches upon the lines which we have laid down for the guidance of the student. Our object is to dive below the surface, to reach, as far as possible, the very mechanism of his being. With this end in view we shall study the character, first with the idea of discovering what Hamlet was, by nature and by education, before the period of the play, and then by observing this attitude with respect to all those who surround him and his behaviour under all the circumstances in which he is placed, we may at length arrive at something like a correct appreciation of those mental and moral qualities, the sum of which constitutes what we understand by the word character.

HAMLET BEFORE THE ACTION OF THE PLAY.

**His Personal Appearance.** We conceive of Hamlet as being fair, for he was of Scandinavian descent, and of a somewhat phlegmatic, not to say indolent, disposition. He is of slight build, as may be gathered from the comparison he draws between his uncle and his father.

*"My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules."* (I. ii. 152).

His mother's statement that "he is fat, and scant of breath," need not be taken too literally, for she was speaking at the time under the influence of great emotion and great fear, and in her love for her son she would exaggerate the contrast which he presented to the more striking figure of Laertes. We may presume him to have inherited from his father

*"A station like the herald Mercury  
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,"* (III. iv. 58-59).

and in his face and bearing there will have been an amiability and a grace which have made him the darling of the Queen, who "lives upon his looks," and of the populace, "who like not with their judgment, but their eyes." Ophelia may have regarded him with partial eyes, but even if we allow something for natural exaggeration there must still remain within our mind's eye the image of a very noble and princely youth.

*"The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers."* (III. i. 149-152).

"Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth, and the joy of the world."

*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.*

**His Disposition.** By nature Hamlet was of a cheerful, though quiet disposition. In his childhood he had played with Yorick, "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," whose lips he had kissed he "knows not how oft." He had delighted in those "flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar." The melancholy which he exhibits in the course of the play appears to his former friends and acquaintance altogether unnatural and unaccountable.

*"Something have you heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,  
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man  
Resembles that it was."* (II. ii. 1.)

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In the play he utters many sallies of humorous wit, and is cheerful and unreserved when he can for a moment forget the burden that is laid upon him, as when he first meets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, or when he entertains the strolling players (II. ii.). But we shall find generally in the play that his disposition to humour has been changed by the pressure of circumstances, and that it manifests itself chiefly in satire, as in his conversations with Polonius or with Osrice, or in quaint familiar language, recalling perhaps the habits of a former and almost forgotten period of existence, as when he addresses the Ghost.

*" Ah, ha, boy ! say'st thou so ? art thou there,  
truspenny ?*

*Come on : you hear this fellow in the cellarage ; "*

(I. v. 136.)

Add to his humorous disposition that he is by nature a hater of shams, a despiser of artifice and dissimulation, scrupulous even in the smallest matters, a seeker after the truth, a true friend, a gentle and devoted son, and a warm but not passionate lover.

" One of the deepest characteristics of Hamlet's nature is a longing for sincerity, for truth in mind and manners, an aversion from all that is false, affected or exaggerated."—*Dowden*.

" To a frame of mind naturally strong and contemplative, but rendered by extraordinary events sceptical and intensely thoughtful, he unites an undeviating love of rectitude, a disposition of the gentlest kind, feelings the most delicate and pure, and a sensibility painfully alive to the smallest deviation from virtue or propriety of conduct."—*Drake*.

**He is a Student.** His first thought after receiving the injunction of his father's ghost is to

*" wipe away all trivial fond records,  
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,  
That youth and observation copied there."*

(I. v. 83-85.)

He frequently expresses himself in abstractions and generalities, a habit often indicative of a highly cultured mind. This he does even when most violently moved, as in the speech from which we have already quoted.

*" My tables,—meet it is I set it down,  
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain."*

(I. v. 91-92.)

And almost immediately after,

*" There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."*

(I. v. 150-151.)

He has left the University of Wittenberg, and is living in a court which the king would make as gay and frivolous as

possible; he "keeps aloof," and continues his studious habits (II. i. 169 and ii. 192). He is a critic of the drama, can tell when a play is

*"an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set  
down with as much modesty as cunning,"*

(II. ii. 439-440)

and has quotations from classical and other pieces ready to his tongue. He is not without experience in writing dramas, and has studied deeply the actor's art and everything pertaining to it (III. ii. 1-41).

"He is essentially a man of letters; he carries memorandum books with him; allusions to his reading are ready to him; in advanced years he was still at the University, and longed to return there. . . . No royal ambition urges him to the society of his equals; his associate is the scholar Horatio, the friend of his school days and his fellow-student."—*Gerpinus*.

**His Refined Spirit.** The custom of deep-drinking, and of the "heavy-headed revel" which characterized the Danish court and the Danish nation, is held in abhorrence by him. "To my mind," he says,

*"though I am native here,  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance."*

(I. iv. 14-16.)

His kingdom was the Kingdom of the Mind, and his thoughts and speculations were more to him than were the common realities of every-day life. The ambition of Fortinbras stirs him not to ambition. His mother's want of modesty and shame, and the king's grossness stir his soul more profoundly than the crime of murder. In respect of this quality of refinement he belongs to a later age than that in which he lives. "Forgive me this my virtue," he says to his mother,

*"For in the fatness of these pury times  
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,  
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good."*

(III. iv. 153-155.)

"Pure in sentiment, he knew the honourable-minded, and could prize the rest which an upright spirit tastes on the bosom of a friend. To a certain degree, he had learned to discern and value the good and the beautiful in arts and sciences; the mean and the vulgar was offensive to him; and if hatred could take root in his tender soul, it was only so far as to make him properly despise the false and changeful insects of a court, and play with them in easy scorn."—*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*.

"Exquisitely sensible of moral beauty and deformity, he discerns turpitude in a parent. Surprise, on a discovery so painful and unexpected, adds bitterness to his sorrow."—*Richardson*.



## xii. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

### His Intellectual Gifts.

"O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!"  
(III. i. 148)

cries Ophelia in heart-broken accents at the end of the interview, in which Hamlet so successfully played the part of a man "blasted with ecstasy," and she goes on to speak of

"that noble and most sovereign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled," (III. i. 155-156.)

from which we may infer how great had been his reputation for intellectual power in his student days. We see him in the play continually losing sight of his surroundings in his intellectual activity. His thoughts are continually occupied with the infinite and the unknown, his emotions are reflected in words, and almost forgotten in the pleasure he appears to take in giving them utterance. For the rest, he is endowed with a gift of penetration. He reads correctly the thoughts, the motives and the character of others, and is himself deceived neither by Polonius, nor by his former school-fellows, nor yet by Ophelia, whom he loved.

"In Hamlet he seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditation on the workings of our minds—an *equilibrium* between the real and the imaginary worlds. In Hamlet this balance is disturbed; his thoughts, and the images of his fancy, are far more vivid than his actual perceptions. . . . Hence we see a great, an almost enormous, intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it."—*Coleridge*.

**He is Emotional.** His grief for his dead father is profound; he carries his image constantly in his mind

"My father!—methinks I see my father.

Hor. O where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, *Horatio*." (I. ii. 184-185).

Pity for the tortures endured by the suffering ghost is the feeling that first possesses him at his interview with it. He has all the sensibilities that belong to a meditative nature, and though it was not his way to be demonstrative yet he is unable to repress entirely the outward indications of that which is going on within him. He says truly.

"I have that within which passeth show," (I. ii. 85).

His emotion is shown by his irritability in this scene between himself, his uncle and his mother; it is evident in his weaknesses exhibited later on, sudden and violent

passions followed by complete exhaustion. After the murder of Polonius

" *He weeps for what is done*" (IV. i. 27)  
 " *And thus awhile the fit will work on him ;*  
*Anon, as patient as the female dove,*  
*When that her golden couplets are disclosed,*  
*His silence will sit drooping.*" (V. i. 275).

His apparent cruelty and rudeness to Ophelia resulted probably as much from his attempts to restrain his emotion as from any other single cause. His wavering attitude with respect to religion is due to a continual conflict going on within him between his emotions and his reason, between instinctive faith and intellectual doubt.

Hamlet is not merely or chiefly intellectual; the emotional side of his character is quite as important as the intellectual; his malady is as deep-seated in his sensibilities and in his heart as it is in the brain. If all his feelings translate themselves into thoughts, it is no less true that all his thoughts are impregnated with feeling."—*Dowden*.

#### HAMLET DURING THE ACTION OF THE PLAY.

The two characteristics which will perhaps most readily strike the student or the spectator of the play are Hamlet's settled Melancholy and his Irresolution. With his melancholy we may connect his sarcasm and his fits of depression; with his irresolution are closely allied his indolence, his doubts, his inconsistency, fatalism, impulsive action and even, to some extent, his assumed madness.

**Hamlet's Melancholy.** We have said that his natural disposition was to be cheerful (p. xx.). Circumstances, however, have conspired to throw over him a cloud of melancholy, which attends him almost throughout the play. He appears first in the drama with "dejected 'haviour' of the visage," mourning for his father. The Queen beseeches him •

" *Do not for ever with thy veiled lids*  
*Seek for thy noble father in the dust.*"  
 (I. ii. 70-71).

His uncle bids him "throw to earth this unprevailing woe." The company passes out and he is left alone. His first words afford an indication of the depths of despair to which he has fallen through grief and through indulgence in a mysterious foreboding of evil :

" *O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,*  
*Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !*"  
 (I. ii. 129-130)

Polonius has observed his melancholy, and puts his own construction upon it - that it is a wrong one goes without saying,

*"And he, repulsed (a short tale to make),  
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast; "*

(II. ii. 147-149).

In conversation with his old school-fellows Hamlet describes, without accounting for, the change that has taken place within him.

*I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o’erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.*

(II. ii. 297-305).

Thus he has come to look upon all nature, physical and human, in which he once delighted, with a jaundiced eye. He speculates on death, and meditates suicide, he "walks four hours together" in the palace hall, his gait and visage bespeaking woe. The king fears him,

*"There's something in his soul,  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood; "*

(III. i. 162-163).

After the Player's recitation he refers to his melancholy, ingeniously weaving it into one of the many excuses by which he habitually deceived himself as to the cause of his inaction. "Perhaps," he says, the devil

*"Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,  
(As he is very potent with such spirits),  
Abuses me to damn me: "*

(II. ii. 605-606).

He haunts graveyards, he is stirred to a passionate excitement at the sight of Laertes, "whose grief bears such an emphasis," and would "make a match with him in shedding tears," and then again "as patient as the female dove."

*"His silence will sit drooping "* (V. i. 289).

**He is Sarcastic.** He who in former days was witty and humorous, now becomes bitterly sarcastic. He speaks of the king in terms of haughty disdain or of scornful disgust. During the interlude he takes a keen delight in lashing the king's conscience,

*"Tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung "*

(III. ii. 227-230)

His mocking words enter like daggers in the ears of the queen, his mother.

*"For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,  
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib.  
Such dear concernings hide?"* (III. iv. 189-191).

Under the cloak of madness he utters most cutting truths to Polonius, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and plays satirically with the foppish courtier, Osric. He endangers his own safety by speaking words of double meaning to his uncle, the king, who has all the while been suspicious of him. "*Farewell, dear mother,*" he says to him on leaving for England.

King. *Thy loving father, Hamlet.*

Ham. *My mother: father and mother is man and wife;  
man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother.*  
(IV. iii. 61-63).

**The Causes of his Melancholy.** First the death of the father whom he loved threw him into a profound grief, then the impropriety of his mother's behaviour, her ingratitude to the memory of her former husband, and her choice of such a man as Claudius to be her second husband offend his refined spirit, and afflict his soul. Add to these causes a suspicion of his uncle's guilt, afterwards converted into a certainty, and a consciousness of his duty of revenge, together with a feeling of the difficulty of performing this duty. All these causes, acting upon a nature formed for meditation and a tranquil life, throw him into a state of melancholy which soon becomes a permanent habit.

"It has been objected to the character of Hamlet, whose most striking feature is profound melancholy, that its keeping is broken in upon by an injudicious admixture of humour and gaiety: but he who is acquainted with the workings of the human heart, will be far, very far indeed, from considering this as any deviation from the truth of nature. Melancholy, when not the offspring of an ill-spent life . . . will sometimes spring with playful elasticity from the pressure of the heaviest burden, and dissipating, for a moment, the anguish of a breaking heart, will, like a sunbeam in a winter's day, illumine all around it with a bright but transient ray . . . an interchange which serves but to prepare the returning storm more deep and gloomy."—*Drake*.

### **Hamlet's Irresolution.**

We shall consider this predominating feature of Hamlet's complex character under various aspects. After pointing out the different occasions upon which he exhibits it and his own consciousness of it, we shall show how it acts upon other phases of his character making him inconsistent, sceptical, a fatalist, cunning and even cruel. We shall then show how it brings its own punishment not only upon himself, but on others also, and finally we shall attempt an explanation as to how it was caused.

## xxvi. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

**How Exhibited.** Hamlet's irresolution is exhibited by his inaction on the following occasions :—

- (1) He does nothing immediately after receiving the Ghost's commands. We shall show later that his madness was not assumed with any view of furthering his revenge.
- (2) He allows two months to pass without taking any steps to compass his object.
- (3) He neglects his opportunity of killing the king while at prayer. His determination to allow the king to escape at such a moment is only part of his general indecision and irresolution.
- (4) He trusts rather to the firmer character of Horatio than to his own to watch the effect of the play upon the king. Having attained his purpose, he rejoices in the success of his stratagem, but this confirmation of his suspicions leads to no action on his part.
- (5) He allows himself to be sent to England, away from the object of his revenge.
- (6) The promptings of his heart bid him refuse to fight with Laertes (V. ii. 21), but he will not listen to the advice of Horatio and postpone the duel.

**By His Own Confession.** After meeting with the Players he shows that he is sensible of his weakness. Contrasting himself with the Actor, he says :—

"What would he do,  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have?" (II. ii. 561-563.)

"For it cannot be  
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall  
To make oppression bitter; or ere this,  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal." (II. ii. 579-583.)

He comes near the secret of his indecision in his famous soliloquy on death and suicide when he says :—

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;  
And enterprises of great pith and moment,  
With this regard, their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action." (III. i. 80-86.)

When the Ghost comes in between himself and his terrified mother, he knows before it speaks that the visitation is "to whet his almost blunted purpose."

"Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread command?"  
(III. iv. 106-108.)

Again the consciousness of his own irresolution strikes him most forcibly by contrast with the impetuous ardour of Fortinbras.

"How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge!" (IV. iv. 32.)

he exclaims, and again, "Examples gross as earth exhort me" (IV. iv. 46).

"How stand I, then,  
That have a father kill'd, a mother stained,  
Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
And let all sleep?" (IV. iv. 56.)

Finally, in conversation with Horatio, he shows how clearly it is his duty to slay the king that hath killed his father, stained his mother, excluded himself from the throne and angled for his life.

"And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,  
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be  
damned,  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil?" (V. ii. 67-70.)

"There is no indecision about Hamlet, as far as his own sense of duty is concerned; he knows well what he ought to do, and over and over again he makes up his mind to do it."—*Coleridge*

### Effect of Irresolution on other Phases of Hamlet's Character.

To such an extent does irresolution work upon the character of Hamlet that it becomes a habit with him, and, permeating his whole being, turns him away from what he once was, thus tending to give to the superficial reader an altogether false impression of his nature. In the following paragraphs we show to what extent his character changes under this influence.

1. **His Inconsistency.** Infirmary of purpose, joined to a natural nobility of instinct and impulse, cannot fail to lead to many inconsistencies. In this respect Hamlet resembles the great majority of mortals,

"Who see the right and do approve it too,  
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue." \*

But not only are Hamlet's actions inconsistent with his opinions, his purposes and his thoughts, but also his

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\* Compare Ovid Met. vii. 29.

thoughts themselves are inconsistent with each other. This kind of inconsistency is manifested generally in his reflections on matters connected with religion. We may discern it in

2. **His Scepticism.** At the beginning of the play he is an adherent of all the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. He believes in purgatory, a hell and a devil, and in the miraculous power of confession, holy communion, and extreme unction. At one time he gives credibility to the re-appearance of the dead in order to reveal and punish murder, at another time he speaks of

*"The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns."* (III. i. 76-77.)

At one time he declares that, "touching this vision here,"

*"It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you."*  
(I. v. 122.)

At another time he strives to persuade himself that

*"The spirit that I have seen  
May be the devil."* (II. ii. 602.)

Towards the end of the play, reason almost ceases to be his guide. He has persuaded himself that

*"Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well  
When our deep plots do pall"* (V. ii. 8-9.)

His carefully laid schemes have proved abortive because, though full of purpose, he was "void of that quality of the mind which accomplishes purpose,"\* and now he willingly allows himself to drift, and

3. **Becomes a Fatalist.** He "worships fatality, and he is apt to regard whatever pertains thereto as incontestable, solemn and beautiful. . . . The unbending, malignant goddess is more acceptable than the divinity, who only asks for an effort that shall avert disaster."† He excuses his inaction by attributing it to a decree of fate.

*"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will,"* (V. ii. 10-11.)

are the words with which he disclaims responsibility for his own dishonourable actions (e.g. the opening the sealed packet and sending his school-fellows to death). Before the duel with Laertes he again gives expression to his religion of Fatalism.

\* Coleridge.

† Maeterlinck.

" *There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow  
If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come,  
it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come.*"  
(V. ii. 219-222.)

"Hamlet has no firm belief either in himself or in anything else; from expressions of religious confidence he passes over to sceptical doubts. . . . He has even gone so far as to say, 'There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.'—*Schlegel*."

"Thus all through the play he wavers between materialism and spiritualism, between belief in immortality and disbelief, between reliance upon providence and a bowing under fate."—*Donnen*.

"Shakespeare's teaching is, that if the nobler-gifted man who stands at the head of the commonwealth, allows himself to be driven about by every wind of the occasion, instead of furthering his better aims with all his strength and energy of will, the wicked, on their part, will all the more easily carry out their own ends."—*Jacob Fels*.

4. **His Cunning and Cruelty.** As is the way with irresolute persons, Hamlet, when he acts, does so impulsively or in blind passion. The consequence is that he performs deeds suddenly of which he afterwards repents. Such deeds were the murder of Polonius and the struggle with Laertes in the grave. At other times he acts impulsively and afterwards persuades himself that he has acted wisely. On the ship he acted before he could "*make a prologue to his brains*," and became the murderer of two innocent men. His impulsiveness is in reality but a sign of his irresolution. He follows his father's ghost in a state of wild excitement, uttering the threat,

" *By heaven I'll make a ghost of him that lets me.*"  
(I. iv. 85).

When the travelling players arrive in Elsinore he proposes immediate action.

" *We'll e'en to 't, like French falconers,  
Fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight.*"  
(II. ii. 429-430).

And when at last he performed his duty and stabbed the king the action was unpremeditated. But his irresolution has a worse effect upon his character than to make him only impulsive and passionate. It makes him also deceptive, a shrewd and cunning contriver. He sacrifices innocent men with cold premeditation and rejoices in his knavery.

" *For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petard: and it shall go hard,  
But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,  
When in one line two crafts directly meet.*"  
(III. iv. 206-210)



## xxx. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

"He who is so irritable an enemy to all dissimulation, falsehood, and cunning, venturing not upon the straight path to action, he himself takes the crooked way of cunning circumlocution and deceiving dissimulation."—*Gerwinus*.

"He is made for honesty, and he is compelled to practice a shifting and subtle stratagem; thus he comes to waste himself in ingenuity and crafty device."—*Doteden*.

**Results of Hamlet's Irresolution.** To resist temptation is to strengthen character, to give way to it is to weaken the power of resistance. Hamlet gave way to his natural tendency to think rather than to act. Consequently his character deteriorated as we have already seen (pp. xxv. xxvi.). The effect of his irresolution upon himself is a continual torture of the mind which he expresses thus:

"*Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,  
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay  
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.*" (V. ii. 4).

It resulted in his own death, and more than that, it involved the death of others, of the innocent as well as of the guilty. Horatio promises to explain the dismal sight with which the play concludes. "So shall you hear," he says,

"*Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,  
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,  
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause;  
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook  
Fall'n on the inventors' heads.*" (V. ii. 381-385).

"In the first tumult of his feelings, and without adequate cause, he throws away the fair flower of Ophelia's love, which he himself had planted and watered; with inconsiderate rashness he kills the old dotard Polonius in mistake for the guilty king, and so brings upon himself the blame of causing Ophelia's madness and death. By a just retribution a tragic end overwhelms Hamlet himself, so quickly and unexpectedly, that he has scarcely time for the hurried and precipitate accomplishment of his long meditated purpose."—*Ulrici*.

**The Causes of Hamlet's Irresolution.** The irresolution of Hamlet appears to have arisen from several causes, of which the following seem to us to be the predominant ones:—

- (1) He is naturally prone to think rather than to act. Being continually wrapped in thought he forgets action.

"*And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.*"  
(III. i. 81-82.)

But this cause alone is not enough to account for his indecision, for we know that the necessity for action was often borne in upon him.

## THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY. xxxi.

- (2) Moral scruples and a Christian spirit deterred him. The particular action that was required of him was of a nature most abhorrent to his sensitive and scrupulous spirit. He hesitates lest he should do

*"such bitter business as the day  
Would quake to look on."* (III. ii. 377.)

*"O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom."*  
(III. ii. 379-380.)

Consequently he was ever trying to find some way other than by using the direct means to his end.

- (3) The feeling of the enormous difficulty of his task, which he expresses in the lines:—

*"The time is out of joint: O cursèd spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right!"*  
(I. v. 173-174.)

His vivid imagination exaggerated the difficulties, and his natural modesty, together with his previous mode of life, filled him with a sense of his own insufficiency.

"To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the root expands, the jar is shivered.

"A lovely, pure, noble and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away."—*Gœthe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.*

"Hamlet is called upon to assert moral order in a world of moral confusion and obscurity. He has not an open plain or a hillside on which to fight his battle; but a place dangerous and misleading, with dim and winding ways. . . . In the wide-spreading waste of corruption which lies around him, he is tempted to understand and detest things, rather than accomplish some limited practical service. In the unweeded garden of the world, why should he task his life to uproot a single weed?"—*Dowden.*

"He sees no course clear enough to satisfy his understanding."  
—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

**Hamlet's Attitude towards Ophelia.** We think that Laertes is estimating Hamlet's conduct towards Ophelia by the standard of his own customary behaviour when he speaks of "the trifling of his favour," and bids her regard it as a pastime.

*"Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;  
No more."* (I. iii. 8-10.)

But even he did not—as some critics have done—charge Hamlet with practising conscious deception upon Ophelia.

*"Perhaps he loves you now;  
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch  
The virtue of his will."* (I. iii. 14-16.)

Of Ophelia's love for him there can be no doubt, although she never confesses it. She yields, perhaps, too ready an obedience to her brother and her father, but she certainly places a most implicit trust in the honourableness of her lover.

*"My lord, he hath importuned me with love,  
In honourable fashion."* (I. iii. 110.)

The interview described by Ophelia, but not presented on the stage, takes place after Hamlet has seen his father's Ghost and received his injunctions. No doubt Hamlet on this occasion approached Ophelia with the intention, which he afterwards carries out, of renouncing woman, "the begetter of all evil in the world, who makes such monsters of wise men" (Cf. III. i. 139). The depth of the love he felt for her is clearly shown by the picture of the agony he suffered at taking leave of her, when

*"He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,  
And end his being."* (II. i. 92-94.)

He continues to love her, but he would not have her know it. When he says,

*"Soft you now!  
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remembered,"* (III. i. 85-87.)

the words are not intended to reach her ears. When she turns to him he feigns madness again, perhaps with a view, as Lamb says, "to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do." We believe that he speaks from his heart of hearts when he exclaims:

*"I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers  
Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum."* (V. i. 270-272.)

"His conduct to Ophelia is quite natural in his circumstances. It is that of assumed madness only. It is the effect of disappointed hope, of bitter regrets, of affection suspended, not obliterated, by the distractions of the scene around him. . . . He could neither marry Ophelia, nor wound her mind by explaining the cause of his alienation, which he durst hardly trust himself to think of. . . . In the harassed state of his mind, he could not have done much otherwise than he did."—*Hastitt*

## THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY. xxxiii.

"I do think, with submission, that the love of Hamlet for Ophelia is deep, is real, and is precisely the kind of love which such a man as Hamlet would feel for such a woman as Ophelia."  
—*Mrs. Jameson.*

"He loved her more than a thousand brothers, with all their love put together could have done."—*Heine.*

**Hamlet's Assumed Madness.** The question is sometimes asked, Was Hamlet really mad, or did he merely assume madness? Common sense at once replies that he was perfectly sane, and that he feigned madness only that he might deceive others. Medical authorities are at variance with one another, probably owing to the difficulty they experience in attaching a precise and definite significance to the word madness.

We may consider his conduct under three phases.

- (1) When he both appears and is perfectly sane.
- (2) When he appears mad but is only feigning madness.  
as in
  - (a) His interview with Polonius, whom he wishes to deceive (II. ii.).
  - (b) His interview with Ophelia, whom he cannot trust with his secret (III. i.).
  - (c) His interview with Claudius, whom he wishes both to deceive and to punish (IV. iii.).
- (3) When, under the immediate influence of some stupendous shock, his intellect staggers, but is not overthrown, as
  - (a) After seeing his father's spirit (I. v.).
  - (b) On hearing of Ophelia's death, and perceiving Laertes' manifestations of grief (V. i.).

It is only in this third phase that Hamlet's conduct lends any colour to the assumption that he is really mad, and not merely "mad in craft." We acknowledge, as he himself does, that on the first of the two occasions referred to, his mind was disordered and his disposition horridly shaken.

"With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls."  
(I. iv. 56.)

And that on the second occasion he forgot himself, and that, too, for insufficient reason.

"But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion."  
(V. ii. 79-80.)

But if to be violently agitated, and in our agitation to perform actions which in our saner moments we should not dream of, if this is to be mad, which of us can say that he is sane?

## xxxiv. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

The obvious reasons for considering Hamlet's madness as feigned, not real, are;—

- (1) His actions are perfectly sane until his interview with the Ghost. After this interview he warns his friends that he may perchance "put an antic disposition on."
- (2) He appears mad only in the presence of those whom he wishes to deceive. He talks rationally and shows great intellectual power in conversation with Horatio, his schoolfellows, the Players, or himself.
- (3) He earnestly and urgently exhorts his mother not to "lay that flattering unction to her soul" that he is speaking to her "in madness," offering to prove to her his perfect sanity.

*"My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
And makes as healthful music; it is not madness  
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,  
And I the matter will re-word; which madness  
Would gambol from."* (III. iv. 140-145.)
- (4) When he does forget himself, he afterwards recognizes the fact and repents of it.

### Motives for Assuming Madness.

"Harassed from without, and distracted from within, is it wonderful, if during his endeavour to conceal his thoughts, he should betray inattention to those around him; incoherence of speech and manner. . . . Hamlet was fully sensible how strange those involuntary improprieties must appear to others; he was conscious he could not suppress them; he knew he was surrounded with spies; and was justly apprehensive, lest his suspicions or purposes should be discovered."—*Richardson*.

To prevent these consequences, and at the same time to afford himself breathing time—for no plan of action immediately occurred to his mind, and he was always reluctant to perform actions—he counterfeits insanity.

"He assumes madness as a means of concealing his actual disturbance of mind. His over-excitability may betray him; but if it be a received opinion that his mind is unhinged, such an excess of over-excitement will pass unobserved and unstudied."—*Dowden*.

"The disguise which he had adopted was not accidentally chosen. The subtlety of his intellect directed him to that tone of wayward sarcasm in which, while he appeared to others to be merely wandering, the bitterness of his soul might be relieved by the utterance of "wild and hurling words." But even in this disguise, his intellectual supremacy is constantly manifested."—*Knight*.

### OLONIUS

Is a man who has grown grey in courts where he has imbibed many a lesson of servility, adulation, and worldly prudence. Of real wisdom he possesses not a trace, and he forfeits all claim to

the respect which his age ought to have gained for him, by his paltry cunning, garrulity, and

**Overweening Self-confidence.** He is, in fact, in his second childhood, or, as Rosencrantz says, "Happily he's the second time come" to his "swaddling clouts." All his actions betray his self-conceit, and he does not hesitate to proclaim his own high opinion of himself. He is confident that he has found out the cause of Hamlet's madness.

*"Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that),  
That I have positively said, 'Tis so,  
When it proved otherwise?"* (II. ii. 154-156).

he asks the king, and when the king replies, "Not that I know," continues.

*"Take this from this, if this be otherwise :  
If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre "* (II. ii. 157-160).

And further he stakes his reputation as a statesman upon the truth of his statements.

*"If he love her not,  
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,  
Let me be no assistant for a state,  
But keep a farm and carters "* (II. ii. 165-168).

There is nothing he cannot do, if we may believe him. He poses as a critic of literature and the drama, and says that in his younger days he "was accounted a good actor." It is even a matter for boasting with him that in his youth he "suffered much extremity for love; very near this," referring to Hamlet's apparent distraction.

**He is Garrulous and Foolish.** Having fallen in love with the sound of his own voice he speaks on every subject, delights in puns and "foolish figures," uses many words in which to clothe little matter, forgets in the middle what he was saying, and with a perversity as strange as it is true to nature, utters wise maxims and sins against them in the same breath, as when he says,

*"Since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief "* (II. ii. 90-92).

and then by his loquacity draws upon himself the Queen's rebuke, "more matter with less art," and at another time eliciting Hamlet's ejaculation, "Those tedious old fools." His folly arises almost entirely from his self-conceit. He considers that his strength lies in penetration, whereas he was in reality most easily deceived. Being filled with a

most exalted notion of his own shrewdness, and feeling sure that Hamlet is mad, he quite fails to see that he himself is a laughing-stock and the object of the Prince's pointed satire. His folly is apparent to others besides Hamlet; hence when the latter bids the Player "follow that lord," he warns him at the same time.

*"And look you mock him not"* (II. ii. 545).

After Hamlet has slain Polonius in mistake for the king, having discovered his error he drags forth the corpse, and thus sums up his character in a few words,

*"Indeed, this counsellor  
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,  
Who was in life a foolish prating knave"*  
(III. iv. 213-215)

**As a Courtier.** Polonius was just the man to suit the king Faithful in service, not too scrupulous nor too penetrating, he is a most useful instrument in the hands of the greater villain Claudius, who speaks of him to Laertes with gratitude.

*"The head is not more native to the heart,  
The hand more instrumental to the mouth  
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father"*  
(I. ii. 47-49).

He serves his master with assiduity and officiousness, and declares,

*"Assure you, my good liege,  
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God, and to my gracious king"*  
(II. ii. 43-45).

For him, to be deceitful is to be wise, and he takes it to be the mark of a courtier, "too much proved."

*"That with devotion's visage  
And pious action, we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself"* (III. i. 47-49).

**His Crooked Ways.** "For crooked ways, for side-thrusts, for eaves-dropping, he has an unwearied predilection, to which he is at length sacrificed." He sets a spy upon his son's actions in Paris, and believes "it is a fetch of warrant." He thinks that to use a "bait of falsehood" in order to take "a carp of truth" is a token "of wisdom and of reach." In the end he falls a victim to his meddlesomeness and taste for eaves-dropping.

*"Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!  
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;  
Thou find'st it to be too busy is some danger."*  
(III. iv. 31-33).

**His Worldly Wisdom.** As Goethe says, he speaks like a book when he is prepared beforehand, and like an ass when he utters the overflowings of his heart. His parting speech to Laertes comprises a collection of rules of conduct that are full of worldly wisdom. As long as he confines himself to generalities his advice may be safely followed, but when he advises in particular instances, as in the case of Hamlet's relations with Ophelia, he generally overshoots the mark. Yet even for his unwarranted suspicion, he has an excuse to offer in a maxim which sounds very much like wisdom.

*"Beshrew my jealousy !*

*It seems, it is as proper to our age*

*To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,*

*As it is common for the younger sort*

*To lack discretion.*

(II. i. 111-115).

As a Father he has been something of a martinet, exacting ready obedience from both his children. He loves them, of that there is no doubt, and he is anxious for them as for himself, that they should stand well with the world. Therefore, he has kept Ophelia apart from the demoralising tendencies of the court, and, therefore, he is anxious that Laertes should commit no act in Paris, by which his reputation might suffer. But his ideas of education are, to say the least, peculiar; immorality, gaming, drinking, or swearing are trifling offences in his opinion, but it is important that his son should "ply his music."

"Polonius is a perfect character in its kind; nor is there any foundation for the objections which have been made to the consistency of this part. It is said that he acts very foolishly and talks very sensibly. There is no inconsistency in that. Again, that he talks wisely at one time and foolishly at another, that his advice to Laertes is very excellent, and his advice to the King and Queen on the subject of Hamlet's madness very ridiculous. But he gives the one as a father and is sincere in it; he gives the other as a mere courtier, a busy-body, and is accordingly officious, garrulous and impertinent."—*Hazlitt*.

"A maxim is a conclusion upon observation of matters of fact, and is merely retrospective . . . Polonius is a man of maxims. While he is descanting on matters of past experience, as in that excellent speech to Laertes before he sets out on his travels, he is admirable; but when he comes to advise or project, he is a mere lordard . . . A man of maxims only is like a cyclop with one eye, and that eye placed in the back of his head."—*Coaridge*.

"Arrived at a ripe age, the schooled courtier lacks no experience and observation, which he has carefully gathered and loquaciously gives forth; the self-conceit of emptiness is apparent in him, and with the same self-sufficiency he gives good precepts to his son, a lesson on human nature to his servant, and counsel to his king."—*Gervinus*.

"The shrewd, wary, subtle, pompous, garrulous old courtier."—*Mrs. Jameson*.



LAERTES is an impetuous youth "of great showing," "the card or calendar of the gentry," a man of action and the greatest possible contrast to Hamlet.

He is determined in the attainment of his object and unscrupulous as to the means he adopts to attain it. "By laboursome petition" he overbore his father's reluctance to allow him to return to Paris, and "at last," says Polonius,

*"Upon his will I sealed my hard consent"* (I. ii. 60).

He allows no obstacle to stand in the way of his revenge, and is willing even to cut the murderer's throat "i' the church." He who claims to be "the continent of what part a gentleman should be" is deterred by no scruples of conscience, no considerations of honour. He even venoms the point of the sword with which he is to "play" with Hamlet.

*"I'll touch my point  
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,  
It may be death"* (IV. vii. 145-147).

Such is his determination that he can even exercise patience in the pursuit of his revenge. Having heard of the death of his father and his secret burial, he at once returned from France, but, being as yet doubtful as to the cause of Polonius' death and suspecting no one, he

*"Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds"*  
(IV. v. 80).

until suspicion is cast upon the King as the author of Polonius' death. Then he allows free play to

### His Impetuosity.

*"The ocean, overpeering of his list,  
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste  
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'erbears your officers"* (IV. v. 90-93).

No dread of "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns" puzzles his will. "To this point I stand," he says

*"That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged  
Most thoroughly for my father"* (IV. v. 122-124).

Not all the world shall stay him, and for his means, he'll husband them so well

*"They shall go far with little"* (IV. v. 127).

## THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY. xxxix.

At the sight of Ophelia's madness his frenzy is still further excited.

*"By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,  
Till our scale turn the beam"* (IV. v. 144-145).

No wonder then that the King afterwards confided to his wife

*"How much I had to do to calm his rage!  
Now fear I this will give it start again"*  
(IV. vii. 191-192).

With characteristic impetuosity and violence he shews his grief on hearing of Ophelia's death. He does not, for ever, with veiled lids seek for his father and his sister in the dust. Tears gush forth.

*"Nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will"* (IV. vii. 186-187).

When she is laid in her grave he leaps in after her to catch her once more in his arms, and his grief bears such an emphasis, says Hamlet, that it

*"Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand.  
Like wonder-wounded hearers"* (V. i. 257-258).

**He is addicted to pleasure and to wildness.** Rumours of his wildness must have reached the ears of Ophelia; otherwise the meek and gentle maiden could never have replied to his fraternal advice with her one almost spirited speech,

*"Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
And recks not his own rede"* (I. iii. 47-51).

He had come from the gay city to see the coronation, and as soon as that function was over he returned thither with all possible speed. His father, knowing him to be addicted to

*"Such wanton, wild, and usual slips  
As are companions noted and most known  
To youth and liberty"* (II. i. 22-24).

had with reluctance allowed him to return to Paris, but, having given his permission, he could not rest without sending Reynaldo to spy out his actions there; so little confidence had the mistrustful father in the son's prudence and self-restraint.

"Laertes is the cultured young gentleman of the period. He is accomplished, chivalric, gallant, but the accomplishments are superficial, the chivalry theatrical, the gallantry of a showy kind. He is master of events up to a certain point, because he sees their

## II. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

coarse, gaudy, superficial significance. It is his part to do fine things and make fine speeches.

No overweight of thought, no susceptibility of conscience retard the action of the young gallant. He readily falls in with the king's scheme of assassination, and adds his private contribution of villainy—the venom on his rapier's point."—*Deussen*.

### CONTRAST BETWEEN LAERTES AND HAMLET.

Laertes is a man of action; Hamlet a speculative philosopher. Laertes leaves no time for thought but rushes impetuously towards his object; Hamlet is too much taken up with thought to allow of action. Laertes overcomes every obstacle and uses every opportunity; Hamlet has fewer obstacles to overcome and neglects every opportunity. Laertes sullies his knightly honour by poisoning his weapon; Hamlet is of a nature so free and generous that he will not so much as "peruse the foils." With Hamlet revenge was a religious duty, a duty to his country, to his murdered father and to himself; with Laertes it was a matter of honour only. And what a contrast there was between the murdered fathers! the one

*"A combination, and a form, indeed,  
Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
To give the world assurance of a man"*

(III. iv. 60-62.)

the other a "foolish, prating knave," a ridiculous, tedious, prying, self-complacent sinner.

"Laertes is the opposite and the pendant to Hamlet. The position of both is nearly the same. Laertes, too, has to avenge the death of a father and sister. His soul, however, kindles at once with passionate ardour. Rejecting all deliberation, his resolutions burst forth at once into action, and it is with difficulty that the persuasive eloquence of the King succeeds in restoring him to self-possession, and the adoption of artifice and dissimulation."—*Clifford*.

"Laertes, somewhat of a hero *à la mode*, a fiercer, a knight of honour of the French school, of temperament as choleric as Hamlet's is melancholy, a man utterly unendowed with the splendid physical and mental gifts of Hamlet, flees from the distant Paris to Denmark to avenge the death of his father."—*Gervinus*.

### OPHELIA.

"Rose of May," "sweet maid," she possessed more of the qualities of the heart than of the head. Although she appears but rarely in the play, and though half the time she is "divided from herself and her fair judgment,"

*"Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts"*  
(IV. v. 77.)

yet her influence is felt throughout the play, and her purity and innocence afford relief and repose amidst the worldliness, the mystery and the dissimulation which characterise most of the other personages of the drama.

**She is Childlike and Innocent.** Unlike her father and her brother she possessed no knowledge of the world or of its wickedness, and has remained untouched by the vitiating influences of court life.

*" Unsifted in such perilous circumstance "*

(I. iii, 102.)

and hence, when she has fallen in love with Hamlet and he with her, she devotes herself, heart and soul, to her lover, and, until restrained by the influence of her father and brother,

*" Have of her audience been most free and bounteous "*

(I. iii, 98).

Her innocent mind contains no secret corner, and she answers readily every question put to her on the subject of her lover.

We must not suppose that Hamlet's strictures on women (III. i.) were addressed specially to Ophelia or that they implied any stain on the virtue or honesty of the docile maid. His upbraidings were directed against the sex in general, and were inspired most probably by the recent conduct of his own mother. It is more than possible also, that Ophelia acted her part so ill that Hamlet was able to see from her gestures and behaviour that the meeting was being watched. His one anxiety appears to have been that her innocence and purity might remain unspotted by contact with the world, and hence he urges her, "Get thee to a nunnery. . . . We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery." Laertes, frivolous and shallow though he be himself, can yet appreciate and reverence the beauty and purity of his sister's brief life. "Lay her i' the earth," he commands the bigoted priest.

*" And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A ministering angel shall my sister be,  
When thou liest howling "*

(V. i. 240-243).

We can hardly wish her to have been in any wise other than she was; yet if she had a fault, it was that she appeared at times

**Too Docile.** She listens meekly to her brother's precepts and promises.

*" I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
As watchman to my heart "*

(I. iii, 45-46).

And in all things she obeys her father, no matter how much it costs her to disobey the promptings of her heart. She shows him the letters that are in her keeping and repels

others, and by command, denies Hamlet access to her. She even allows herself to be used as a snare whereby the Prince's secrets may be discovered, and offers no protest when Polonius bids her play her part of dissimulation, reading on a book.

*"That show of such an exercise may colour  
Her loneliness"* (III. i. 45).

**Her Love for Hamlet** was stronger than her discretion. Although she never declares her love in so many words, yet we know that her heart was given entirely to him. We can believe that "she would hang on him,"

*"As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on"* (I. ii. 144-145).

We know that she "suck'd the honey of his music vows," and that his loss to her made her "of ladies most deject and wretched." And yet we may be sure that her love was not such that Hamlet could derive strength from it, for it was not such that could enable her to understand him. The Queen, we know, hopes in vain that her virtues

*"Will bring him to his wonted way again"* (III. i. 41.)

to the honour of them both. She was born to live in an atmosphere of calm and comfort, not to strive with the conflicting forces of the world.

"The Margaret of Goethe and Ophelia of Shakespeare had perforce to yield mutely to fate, for they were so feeble that each gesture they witnessed seemed fate's own gesture to them. But yet, had they only possessed some fragment of Antigone's strength—the Antigone of Sophocles—would they not then have transfigured the desires of Hamlet and Faust as well as their own."—*Masterlinck*.

**Her Madness.** Unlike the apparently random utterances of Hamlet, whose speech "was not like madness" but had method in it, Ophelia's "speech is nothing," or carries "but half-sense." She alternates, between laughter and tears, and in her thoughts, flowers and prettiness are strangely mixed up with the wickedness of the world's ways. Her conversation about her father is "interlarded with sweet songs." She becomes a mere picture, "incapable of her own distress," but in her ruin, beautiful still as ever.

*"Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,  
She turns to favour and to prettiness"*

(IV. v. 175-176).

As Mrs. Jameson has said: "It is not the suspension, but the utter destruction of the reasoning powers; it is the total imbecility which, as medical people well know, frequently follows some terrible shock to the spirits.

Constance is frantic; Lear is mad; Ophelia is *insane*. Her sweet mind lies in fragments before us—a pitiful spectacle! . . . . It belonged to Shakespeare alone so to temper such a picture that we can endure to dwell upon it."

"Ophelia—poor Ophelia! Oh, far too soft, too good, too fair, to be cast among the briers of this working-day world, and fall and bleed upon the thorns of life! What should be said of her? for eloquence is mute before her! Like a strain of sad, sweet music, which comes floating by us on the wings of night and silence, and which we rather feel than hear—like the exhalation of the violet, dying even upon the sense it charms—like the snowflake, dissolved in air before it has caught a stain of earth—like the light surf severed from the billow, which a breath disperses; such is the character of Ophelia."—*Mrs. Jameson*.

#### HORATIO,

in contrast to all the other characters of the play, is the representative of common-sense and honesty. He is the one man upon whose judgment Hamlet can rely when all others fail him. He alone affords a happy contradiction to the Player's general statement,

"The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;  
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies"

(III. ii. 191-192).

**Perfect Calmness of Mind and Equability of Temperament** are his chief characteristics. He is nothing in extremes. A scholar but not a pedant; he is sceptical, but open to conviction; though not essentially a man of action, as Fortinbras was, he was able to bear his part in the action of the world. He is great in his power of endurance, for he has been—

"As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;  
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards  
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blessed are those,  
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,  
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger  
To sound what stop she please" (III. ii. 65-70).

Hamlet confides in his discretion and relies upon his calmness and absence of bias to observe his uncle's demeanour during the acting of the play. He resembles Hamlet in his hatred of all that is shallow, affected or false, and does not trouble to conceal his contempt for the "lapwing" Osric. He is the soul of honour, but holds in no esteem the world's false notions of honour. Therefore, he begs of Hamlet to postpone his fencing bout with Laertes, because he sees that the mind of his friend is not attuned

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to such a contest, and because he discerns disaster in the issue. Being "more an antique Roman than a Dane," he possesses the firmness of heart, and carelessness about his own life of a Brutus or a Cato, and would have emulated their example and died with his friend had not Hamlet reminded him that there remained for him a duty yet to perform in this world.

**As Hamlet's Friend.** He is the only man of all those by whom Hamlet was surrounded who seeks no material advantage for himself. He possessed the entire confidence of the prince, and into his bosom Hamlet unburdened himself of "the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce." From Horatio, Hamlet derived the support he needed to preserve what balance of mind he still retained; to Horatio he communicated his suspicions, his griefs, and his designs; without Horatio's sympathy, he would have fallen into a condition of permanent despair and pessimism, from which no effort could have aroused him. And Horatio loved Hamlet as his own life; he alone was fully conscious of the true nobility of the prince's character, and therefore the poet has appropriately given it to him to speak words of praise over his dead body which recall to us our first impressions of the noble son of an excellent father,

*"Now cracks a noble heart: good night, sweet prince;  
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest"*  
(V. ii. 359-360).

"The qualities that distinguish Horatio, and render him worthy of the esteem of Hamlet, are not affluence, nor pageantry, nor gay accomplishments, nor vivacity, nor even wit, and uncommon genius, too often allied to an impetuous temper; he is distinguished by that equanimity and independence of soul which arise from governed and corrected passions, from a sound and discerning judgment."—*Richardson*.

"Horatio's equanimity, his evenness of temper, is like solid land to Hamlet after the tossings and tumult of his own heart."—*Dowden*.

### FORTINBRAS,

the nephew of the King of Norway, a prince, "delicate and tender" but spirited and ambitious, forms a contrast to both Hamlet and Horatio. He is indeed

**The Man of Action** of the play who must always have some project on hand, and is never happy unless engaged in "some enterprise that hath a stomach in it." Being, as Horatio says,

*"Of unimproved metal hot and full"* (I. i. 96.)

he engages in martial enterprises merely for the sake of fighting, not for the material advantage he may gain from

victory. He furnishes Hamlet with an example which the latter is quick to perceive and to admire, but powerless to follow. "Examples gross as earth, exhort me," SAYS Hamlet,

*"Witness this army, of such mass and charge,  
Led by a delicate and tender prince;  
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,  
Makes mouths at the invisible event;  
Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,  
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,  
Even for an egg-shell"* (IV. iv. 47-53).

He is obedient to his uncle, the King of Norway, who, appreciating his spirit of adventure, pardons his indiscretion and furnishes him with assistance in order that he may satisfy his craving for action. As he is single-minded and keeps his object ever before his eyes,

**He is Successful.** He returns successful from his expedition against Poland, an expedition

*"That hath in it no profit but the name"* (IV. iv. 19.)

and receives Hamlet's dying voice for his election to the sovereignty of Denmark. His whole heart is wrapped up in soldiery, the sound of war is music to him, scenes of death a "feast." "Such a sight as this," he says, referring to the scene of carnage with which the play concludes,

*"Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss"* (V. ii. 402).

Being a successful leader he must have been a good judge of character, and though Hamlet in the play exhibits very few of the qualities of a great soldier, still the commendation of Fortinbras contributes much towards raising our final impression of the Danish prince. He grieves over the series of disasters that has made his own fortunes, and pays a soldier's tribute to Hamlet.

*"Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;  
For he was likely, had he been put on,  
To have proved most royally"* (V. ii. 395-398).

"With none of the rare qualities of the Danish Prince, he excels him in plain grasp of ordinary fact. Shakespeare knows that the success of these men who are limited, definite, positive, will do no dishonour to the failure of the rarer natures to whom the problem of living is more embarrassing, and for whom the tests of the world are stricter and more delicate."—*Dowden*.

## OSRIC

is the representative of the showy and fashionable courtier of Elizabeth's reign rather than a type belonging to any period in the history of Denmark. His wealth and terri-



torial possessions have sufficed to procure him a position at court,—“he hath much land, and fertile”—his slender intellectual equipment, together with a desire to distinguish himself from ordinary mortals, have led him to ape, to the best of his ability, the latest fashion set at the court by a few brilliant spirits, scholars and *litterati* (Lily and his fellow-Euphuists); but, as is the way with imitators and converts, he goes further than his models whose purposes he misunderstands. He mistakes extravagance and absurdity of diction for wit, ridiculous formality for true politeness and courtliness, affectation for originality.

“*Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out*” (V. ii. 190-195).

He is superficial and shallow, forward and insincere. He either fails to see or pretends not to see that he is a mark for the contempt of Horatio and a butt for the satire and mimicry of Hamlet. Although it is not directly stated in the play, that he was a party to the treachery of Laertes, we are, nevertheless, led to infer that he was conscious of it, for it was he who handed the foils to the combatants, and it was to him that Laertes, dying, said,

“*Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;  
I am justly killed with mine own treachery*”  
(V. ii. 307-308.)

a confession he receives without betraying any mark of astonishment.

#### ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN \*

were fellow-students with Hamlet at Wittenberg, and were much beloved by him. “Good gentlemen,” says the Queen,

“*he hath much talked of you;  
And, sure I am, two men there are not living  
To whom he more adheres*” (II. ii. 19-21).

They are received with cordiality by the Prince, who meets them freely and without reserve until he perceives that they have suffered themselves to be corrupted by the King. They are typical of the class of men whose inclinations are good enough, but who are without the force of character necessary even to follow their own inclinations. They are, in fact, so weak that they cannot even practice villainy with success. “You were sent for,” says Hamlet, “*and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour*” (II. ii. 280-282).

They commit no actual crime in the play, and are apparently no worse than the society in which they move. But they "*soak up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities; he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed; when he needs what you have gleaned,*" says Hamlet, "*it is but squeezing you, and, spunge, you shall be dry again*" (IV. ii. 15-21).

They are fools more than they are knaves, but Shakespeare knew that folly is often more harmful in the world than knavery. When death is meted out to them as a punishment for their base servility, Hamlet satisfies himself with the reflection,

"*Why, man, they did make love to this employment:  
They are not near my conscience; their defeat  
Does by their own insinuation grow*"

(V. ii. 57-59,

He feels no compunction at their fate, and we ourselves feel that though their punishment was severe, they left the world no poorer for their loss.

Wilhelm Meister translates Hamlet and adapts it for the stage, a difficulty arises in finding characters to fill all the parts and Serlo, the stage manager, suggests that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern should be compressed into one. "Heaven preserve me from all such curtailments!" answered Wilhelm, "they destroy at once the sense and the effect. What these two persons are and do, it is impossible to represent by one. In such small matters, we discover Shakespeare's greatness. These soft approaches, this sniveling and bowing, this assenting, wheedling, flattery, this whisking agility, this wagging of the tail, this aliveness and emptiness, this legal knavery, this ineptitude and insipidity,—how can they be expressed by a single man? There ought to be at least a dozen of these people, if they could be had: for it is only in society that they are anything; they are society itself, and Shakespeare showed no little wisdom and discernment in bringing in a pair of them."—*Göethe*

THE GRAVEDIGGERS are characters interesting from many points of view. They represent the lower stratum in the social organization of the times—and of all times—and so help to complete the picture of society presented in the play; they afford relief also to the mind of spectator or reader from the excitement and tension of preceding scenes. They belong to the type of workmen with which we are familiar in the present day. They sing and dally over their work, they argue with one another and discuss topics which they cannot comprehend, but to which, nevertheless, they bring a considerable amount of common-sense. They are tinged with socialism and are at enmity with privilege, freely expressing their views on the legality of Ophelia's burial in sanctified ground. Hamlet remarks of them, "*By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe*

## xlvi. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

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*of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe"* (V. i. 138). The First Clown seeks to show his cleverness and ingenuity in words—"How absolute the knave is!"—he has caught the trick of the age, and can reason and philosophise with the prince of philosophers.

### THE GHOST

*"I am thy father's spirit" . . .* (1. v. 9).

"The awful horror excited by the foregoing passage, is accomplished by simplicity of expression, and by the uncertainty of the thing described. The description is indirect, and by exhibiting a picture of the effects which an actual view of the real object would necessarily produce in the spectator, it affects us more strongly than by a positive enumeration of the most dreadful circumstances. The imagination left to her own inventions, overwhelmed with obscurity, travels far into the regions of error, into the abysses of fiery and unfathomable darkness."—*Richardson*.

# HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

## Dramatis Personæ.

CLAUDIUS, <i>King of Denmark.</i>	REYNALDO, <i>Servant to POLONIUS.</i>
HAMLET, <i>Son to the former King, and Nephew to the present.</i>	A Captain.
HORATIO, <i>Friend of HAMLET.</i>	Ambassadors.
POLONIUS, <i>Lord Chamberlain.</i>	Ghost of HAMLET's Father.
LAERTES, <i>his Son.</i>	FORTINBRAS, <i>Prince of Norway</i>
VOLTIMAND, } <i>Courtiers.</i>	Two Clowns, <i>Grave-diggers.</i>
CORNELIUS, }	GERTRUDE, <i>Queen of Denmark and Mother to HAMLET.</i>
ROSENCRANTZ, }	OPHELIA, <i>Daughter to POLONIUS.</i>
GUILDENSTERN, }	Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants.
OSRIC, }	
MARCELLUS, } <i>Officers.</i>	
BERNARDO, }	
FRANCISCO, <i>a Soldier.</i>	

SCENE: *Elsinore.*

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter BERNARDO.

Bernardo. Who's there?

Francisco. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Bernardo. Long live the king!

Francisco. Bernardo?

Bernardo. He.

Francisco. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Bernardo. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed.

Francisco.

*Francisco.* For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.

*Bernardo.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Francisco.* Not a mouse stirring. 10

*Bernardo.* Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The *rivals* of my watch, bid them make haste.

*Francisco.* I think I hear them.—Stand! Who's there?

*associates*

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Horatio.* Friends to this *grout*.

*Marcellus.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Francisco.* Give you good night.

*Marcellus.* O! farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath relieved you?

*Francisco.* Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night. [*Exit.*]

*Marcellus.* Holla! Bernardo!

*Bernardo.* Say, what, is Horatio there?

*Horatio.* A piece of him.

*Bernardo.* Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

*Marcellus.* What, has this thing appeared again to-night?

*Bernardo.* I have seen nothing.

*Marcellus.* Horatio says 'tis but our *fantasy*,

And will not let belief take hold of him,

Touching this *dreaded* sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That, if again this apparition come,

He may *approve* our eyes, and speak to it.

*Horatio.* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

*Bernardo.* Sit down awhile; 30

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story,

What ~~we~~ two nights have seen.

*country*

20

*imagination*

*dreadful*

*prow*

*Horatio.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Bernardo.* Last night of all,  
When yond same star, that's westward from the pole,  
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then *beating* one—

*Marcellus.* Peace! break thee off;—look, where it  
comes again!

*Enter Ghost.*

*Bernardo.* In the same figure, like the king that's  
dead.

*Marcellus.* Thou art a scholar; speak to it, *Horatio.*

*Bernardo.* Looks it not like the king? mark it,  
*Horatio.*

*Horatio.* Most like: it harrows me with fear and  
wonder.

*Bernardo.* It would be *spoke* to.

*Marcellus.* Question it, *Horatio.*

*Horatio.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of  
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form

In which the majesty of buried *Denmark*

Did *sometimes* march? by heaven, I charge thee, speak!

*Marcellus.* It is offended.

*Bernardo.* See, it stalks away.

*Horatio.* Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!  
[*Exit Ghost.*

*Marcellus.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Bernardo.* How now, *Horatio*! you tremble, and look  
pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you *on't*?

*Horatio.* Before my God, I *might* not this believe,  
Without the sensible and true *vouch*  
Of mine own eyes.

*Marcellus.* Is it not like the king?

*Horatio.* As thou art to thyself:  
Such was the very armour he had on

*striking*

*spoken*

*king of  
formerly*

*on it  
could  
warrant*



When he the ambitious *Norway* combated ;  
 So frowned he once, when, in an angry *parle*,  
 He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.  
 'Tis strange !

king of  
*parley*

*Marcellus*. Thus, twice before, and *jump* at this dead  
 hour,

just

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

*Horatio*. In what particular thought to work I know  
 not ;

But, in the *gross and scope* of my opinion,  
 This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

general range

*Marcellus*. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that  
 knows,

70

Why this same strict and most observant watch  
 So nightly toils the subject of the land ;  
 And why such daily *cast* of brazen cannon,  
 And foreign *mart* for implements of war ;  
 Why such *impress* of shipwrights, whose sore task  
 Does not *divide* the Sunday from the week ;  
 What might be *toward*, that this sweaty haste  
 Doth make the night joint labourer with the day :  
 Who is't that can inform me ?

casting  
 market  
 pressed into  
 service  
 distinguish  
 near at hand

✕ *Horatio*. That can I ;

80

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,  
 Whose image even but now appeared to us,  
 Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
 Thereto *pricked* on by a most *emulate* pride,  
*Dared* to the combat ; in which our valiant Hamlet  
 (For so this side of our known world esteemed him)  
 Did slay this Fortinbras : who, by a sealed compact,  
 Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
 Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
 Which he stood *seized of*, to the conqueror :  
 Against the which, a moiety *competent*  
 Was *gaged* by our king ; which *had* returned  
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
 Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same covenant  
 And carriage of the article designed,  
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras  
 Of unimproved *metal* hot and full,

spurred  
 envious  
 challenged

90

possessed of  
 corresponding  
 pledged  
 would have

mettle, courage

Hath in the *skirts* of Norway, here and there,  
 Sharked up a *list* of lawless *resolutes*,  
 For food and diet, to some enterprize  
 That hath a *stomach* in't : which is no other  
 (As it doth well appear unto our state)  
*But* to recover of us, by strong hand  
 And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands  
 So by his father lost : and this, I take it,  
 Is the main motive of our preparations,  
 The source of this our watch, and the chief head  
 Of this post-haste and *romage* in the land.

*Bernardo.* I think it be no other *but* even so :  
 Well may it *sort*, that this portentous figure  
 Comes armed through our watch—so like the king  
 That was, and is, the *question* of these wars.

*Horatio.* A *note* it is to trouble the mind's eye.  
 In the most high and *palmy* state of Rome,  
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
 The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead  
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets :  
*As* stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,  
 Disasters in the sun ; and the *moist star*  
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire *stands*  
 Was sick almost to *doomsday* with eclipse :  
 And even the like *precurse* of fierce events,  
 As harbingers preceding *still* the fates,  
 And prologue to the *ocean* coming on,  
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.

*Re-enter Ghost.*

But soft, behold ! lo, where it comes again !  
 I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion !  
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
 Speak to me :  
 If there be any good thing to be done,  
 That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,  
 Speak to me :  
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
 Which, *happily*, *foreknowing* may avoid.

*borders*  
*muster roll*  
*filibusters*

100 *stubborn*  
*courage*  
*than*

*stir*  
*than*  
*accord*

110 *cause*  
*an atom*  
*prosperous*

*namely*  
*the moon*  
*depends*

120 *death*  
*forewarning*  
*constantly*  
*calamity*

130

*happily*  
*foreknowing*



O, speak !

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

[*Cock crows.*]

Speak of it : stay, and speak !—Stop it, Marcellus.

*Marcellus.* Shall I strike at it with my *partisan* ? 140

*Horatio.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Bernardo.*

"Tis here !

*Horatio.*

"Tis here ! [*Exit Ghost.*]

*Marcellus.* 'Tis gone !

We do it wrong, being so *majestic*,

To offer it the show of violence ;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,

And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Bernardo.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Horatio.* And then it started, like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard

The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat

Awake the god of day ; and at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,

The *extravagant* and *erring* spirit hies

To his *confine* : and of the truth herein

This present object made *probation*.

*Marcellus.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

This *bird of dawn*ing singeth all night long :

And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad ;

The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike :

No fairy *takes*, nor witch hath power to charm ;

So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

*Horatio.* So have I heard, and do in part believe it.

✓ But, look, the morn, in *russet* mantle clad,

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,

Break we our watch up ; and, by my advice,

Let us impart what we have seen to-night

Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life,

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

*weapon*

*majestic*

150

*roving  
wandering  
limit  
proof*

160

*cock*

*infects*

*grey*

170

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,  
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

*Marcellus.* Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning  
know

Where we shall find him most conveniently.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Castle*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,  
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's  
death

*The memory be green*; and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom

To be contracted in one brow of woe;

Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,

That we with wisest sorrow think on him,

Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our *sometime* sister, now our queen,

The imperial jointress of this warlike state,

Have we, as 'twere with a *defeated* joy,—

With one *auspicious*, and one *dropping* eye,

With mirth in funeral, and with *dirge* in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and *dole*,—

Taken to wife: nor have we herein *barred*

Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone

With this affair along. For all, our thanks.

Now follows, *that you know*, young Fortinbras,

Holding a weak *supposal* of our worth,

Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,

Our state to be *disjoint* and out of frame,

<sup>1</sup> Colleague'd with the dream of his advantage,

He hath not failed to *pester* us with message,

*Importing* the surrender of those lands

Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,

To our most valiant brother.—So much for him

*fresh in our  
memory*

*formerly  
joint possessor*

10 *marred  
happy looking  
shedding tears  
lamentation  
grief  
excluded*

*i.e. already  
estimate*

20 *disjointed*

*annoy  
referring to*

<sup>1</sup> Co-operated with the idle fancy he entertained of turning the occasion to his advantage.

Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting :  
 Thus much the business is. We have here *writ*  
 To *Norway*, uncle of young Fortinbras,  
 Who, *impotent* and bed-rid, scarcely hears  
 Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress  
 His further *gait* herein : *in that* the levies,  
 The lists, and full *proportions*, are all made  
 Out of his subject : and we here despatch  
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,  
 For *bearing* of this greeting to old Norway ;  
 Giving to you no further personal power  
 To business with the king, more than the scope  
 Of these *dilated* articles allow.

Farewell ; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cornelius. | In that, and all things, will we show

Voltimand. | our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing : heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?

You told us of some *suit* ; what is't, I aertes ?

' You cannot speak of reason to the *Dane*,

And *lose your voice* : what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?

The head is not more *native* to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?

Laertes.

My dread lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France ;

From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,

To show my duty in your coronation ;

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,

And *bow them* to your gracious leave and *pardon*.

King. Have you your father's leave ? What says  
 Polonius ?

Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my *slow*  
 leave

*written*  
*king of*  
*invalid*

30  
*progress*  
*inasmuch as*  
*contingents*

*to bear*

*for*  
*fully expressed*

40

*request*  
*king of*  
*Denmark*  
*ask in vain*

*connected with*

50

*solicit*  
*permission*

*not quick*

• Speak of any reasonable request to the King of Denmark

By *laboursome* petition ; and, at last,  
Upon his will I sealed my *hard* consent :  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will !  
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son——

*Hamlet.* [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less  
than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

*Hamlet.* Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy *nighted* colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on *Denmark*.

Do not, for ever, with thy *veiled lids*  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust :  
Thou know'st 'tis common—all that lives must die,  
Passing through *nature* to eternity.

*Hamlet.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,  
Why seems it so particular with thee ?

*Hamlet.* Seems, madam ! Nay, it is ; I know not  
“seems.”

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor *windy suspiration* of forced breath,  
No, nor the *fruitful river* in the eye,  
Nor the dejected *haviour* of the visage,  
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,  
That can *denote* me truly. These, indeed, seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play :  
But I have that within which passeth show ;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,  
*Hamlet,*

To give these mourning duties to your father :  
But, you must know, your father lost a father ;  
That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor *bound*,  
In filial obligation, for some *term*  
To do *obsequious* sorrow : but to persevere  
In obstinate *condolement* is a course  
Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief :

60 *laborious*  
*obtained with*  
*difficulty*

70 *benighted*  
*king of*  
*drooping eyes*

*life*

80 *sighs*  
*tears*  
*behaviour*  
*describe*

90 *is bound*  
*time*  
*mourning*  
*sorrow*

It shows a will most <i>incorrect</i> to heaven ;		<i>unsubmissive</i>
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient ;		<i>towards</i>
An understanding simple and unschooled :		
For what we know must be, and is as common		<i>common</i>
As any the most <i>vulgar</i> thing to sense,	100	
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,		
Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,		<i>against</i>
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,		
To reason most absurd ; whose common theme		<i>always</i>
Is death of fathers, and who <i>still</i> hath cried,		
From the first corse till he that died to-day,		
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth		
This <i>unprevailing</i> woe ; and think of us		<i>unavailing</i>
As of a father : for let the world take note,		
You are the <i>most immediate</i> to our throne ;		<i>next heir</i>
And with no less <i>nobility</i> of love	110	<i>ennobling</i>
Than that which dearest father bears his son,		
Do I impart toward you. For your intent		<i>as regards</i>
In going back to school in Wittenberg,		
It is most <i>retrograde</i> to our desire :		<i>opposite to</i>
And we beseech you, <i>bend</i> you to remain		<i>incline, i.e.</i>
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,		<i>decide</i>
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.		
Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :		
I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.		
Hamlet. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.	120	<i>will</i>
King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :		
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;		
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet		
Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,		<i>near</i>
No jocund health that <i>Denmark</i> drinks to-day,		<i>king of</i>
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,		
And the king's rouse the heaven shall <i>bruit</i> again ;		<i>a bumper</i>
Re-speaking earthly thunder.—Come away.		<i>report loudly</i>
		<i>echoing</i>
[ <i>Exeunt all except HAMLET.</i> ]		
Hamlet. (O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,		
Thaw, and <i>resolve</i> itself into a dew !	130	<i>melt away</i>
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed		
His <i>canon</i> 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !		<i>law, rule</i>
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable		

*Solig. ✓*

Seem to me all the *uses* of this world !  
 Fie on't ! O fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
 That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature  
 Possess it *merely*. ) That it should come to this !  
 But two months dead !—nay, not so much, not two :  
 So excellent a king ; that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr : so loving to my mother,  
 That he *might* not *betwixt* the winds of heaven  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !  
 Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on : and yet, within a month,—  
 Let me not think on't,—*Frailty, thy name is woman* ! ✓  
 A *little* month, or ere those shoes were old  
 With which she followed my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears ;—why she, even she,—  
 O God ! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,  
 Would have mourned longer,—married with mine uncle,  
 My father's brother ; but no more like my father  
 Than I to Hercules : within a month ;  
 Ere yet the salt of most *unrighteous* tears  
 Had left the flushing in her *gall'd* eyes,  
 She married :—O, most wicked speed, to *post*  
 With such *dexterity* to incestuous sheets !  
 ( It is not, *nor* it *cannot* come to, good :  
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue !

*Enter* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

*Horatio.* Hail to your lordship !

*Hamlet.* I am glad to see you well : 160

*Horatio*,—or I do forget myself.

*Horatio.* The same, my lord, and your *poor* servant  
 ever

*Hamlet.* Sir, my good friend ; I'll *change* that name  
 with you :

' And what make you from Wittenberg, *Horatio* ?—

*Marcellus* ?

*Marcellus.* My good lord,—

*customs*

*absolutely*

140 *compared to  
could  
grant*

*short*

150 *insincere  
sore  
hurry post-  
haste  
celerity  
Double neg.*

*humble*

*exchange*

' What are you doing away from Wittenberg ?

- Hamlet.* I am very glad to see you. Good even,  
sir.—
- But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?
- Horatio.* A truant disposition, good my lord.
- Hamlet.* I would not hear your enemy say so, 170  
Nor shall you do mine ear *that* violence,  
To make it *truster* of your own report  
Against yourself : I know you are no truant.  
But what is your affair in Elsinore ?  
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.
- Horatio.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
- Hamlet.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-  
student ;
- I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
- Horatio.* Indeed, my lord, it followed *hard upon*. close after
- Hamlet.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral baked 180  
meats  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.  
Would I had met my *dearest* foe in heaven  
*Ere* I had ever seen that *day*, Horatio !—  
My father,—methinks I see my father.
- Horatio.* O, where, my lord ?
- Hamlet.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.
- Horatio.* I saw him once ; he was a goodly king.
- Hamlet.* He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.
- Horatio.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
- Hamlet.* Saw *who* ? 190 whom
- Horatio.* My lord, the king your father.
- Hamlet.* The king, my father !
- Horatio.* Season your *admiration* for a while \*  
With an *attent* ear, till I *may deliver*,  
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,  
This marvel to you.
- Hamlet.* For God's love, let me hear.
- Horatio.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead vast and middle of the night,  
Been thus *encountered*. A figure like your father,  
Armed at all points *exactly*, cap-à-pé, 200 to the minut-  
est particular

Appears before them, and with solemn march  
 Goes *slow* and stately by them : thrice he walked  
 By their oppressed and fear-surprised eyes,  
 Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, *distilled*  
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
 Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me  
 In *dreadful* secrecy impart they did ;  
 And I with them the third night kept the watch :  
 Where, as they had *delivered*, both in time,  
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good, 210  
 The apparition comes : I knew your father ;  
 These hands are not more like.

*Hamlet.* But where was this ?

*Marcellus.* My lord, upon the platform where we  
 watched.

*Hamlet.* Did you not speak to it ?

*Horatio.* My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none : yet once, methought,  
 It lifted up its head, and did address  
 Itself to motion, like *as* it would speak :  
 But, *even then*, the morning cock crew loud ;  
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,  
 And vanished from our sight.

*Hamlet.* 'Tis very strange. 220

*Horatio.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;  
 And we did think it *writ* down in our duty  
 To let you know of it. •

*Hamlet.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

*Marcellus.* { We do, my lord.  
*Bernardo.* { •

*Hamlet.* Armed, say you ?

*Marcellus.* { Armed, my lord.  
*Bernardo.* { •

*Hamlet.* • From top to toe ?

*Marcellus.* { My lord, from head to foot.  
*Bernardo.* { •

*Hamlet.* Then saw you not his face ?

*Horatio.* O yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up. 230

*Hamlet.* What, looked he frowningly ?

*slowly**melted**awestruck**related**as if  
just then**written*



Horatio.	A countenance more	
In sorrow than in anger.		
Hamlet.	Pale, or red ?	
Horatio.	Nay, very pale.	
Hamlet.	And fixed his eyes upon you ?	
Horatio.	Most constantly.	steadily
Hamlet.	I would I had been there !	
Horatio.	It would have much amazed you.	
Hamlet.	Very like,	likely
Very like.	Stayed it long ?	
Horatio.	While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.	count
Marcellus. {	Longer, longer.	
Bernardo. {		
Horatio.	Not when I saw it.	
Hamlet.	His beard was grizzled ? no ? 240	grey
Horatio.	It was, as I have seen it in his life,	
A sable silvered.		
Hamlet.	I will watch to-night ;	
Perchance 'twill walk again.		
Horatio.	I warrant it will.	
Hamlet.	If it assume my noble father's person,	
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,		
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,		
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,		
Let it be <i>tenable</i> in your silence still,		kept secret
And whatsoever else shall <i>hap</i> to-night,		happen
Give it an understanding, but no tongue :	250	
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well :		
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,		
I'll visit you.		
All.	Our duty to your honour.	
Hamlet.	Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.	
[ <i>Exeunt</i> HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.]		
Solo!	My father's <i>spirit</i> in arms ! all is not well ;	1 syllable
	I <i>doubt</i> some <i>foul play</i> : would the night were come !	suspect
	Till then sit still, my soul : <i>foul deeds will rise</i> ,	treachery
	Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.	
	[ <i>Exit.</i>	

## SCENE III.—A Room in POLONIUS' House.

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laertes.* My necessities are embarked : farewell !  
 And, sister, as the winds give benefit,  
 And *convoy* is assistant, do not sleep,  
 But let me hear from you.

according as  
 means of con-  
 veyance

*Ophelia.* Do you doubt that ?

*Laertes.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
 Hold it a *fashion*, and a *toy in blood* ;  
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
 Forward, not permanent, *sweet*, not lasting,  
 The perfume and *suppliance* of a minute ;  
 No more.

changeable  
 fancy  
 2 syllables  
 to fill a place

*Ophelia.* No more but so !

*Laertes.* Think it no more :

10

For nature, *crescent*, does not grow alone  
 In *thews and bulk* ; but, as this *temple waxes*,  
 The inward service of the mind and soul  
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now ;

growing  
 sinews  
 body

And now no *soil* nor *cautel* doth *bemirch*  
 The virtue of his will : but you must fear,  
 His greatness weighed, his will is not his own ;  
 For he himself is subject to his birth :

stain  
 deceit  
 defile

He may not, as *unvalued* persons do,  
 Carve for himself ; for on his choice depends  
 The *safety* and the health of the whole state ;  
 And therefore must his choice be circumscribed

20

of no worth  
 choose  
 3 syllables

Unto the voice and yielding of that body  
 Whereof *he is the head* : then, if he says he loves you,  
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it  
 As he in his particular act and place

he's the head

May give his saying deed ; which is no further  
 Than the *main voice* of Denmark goes withal.  
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,  
 If with too *credent* ear you *list* his songs ;  
 Or lose your heart ; or your chaste treasure open

30

public opinion  
 believing  
 listen to

\* Is able to carry his words into effect.

To his *unmastered* importunity.  
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister ;  
 ' And keep you in the rear of your affection.  
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
 The *chariest* maid is prodigal enough,  
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon :  
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes ;  
 The *canker* galls the infants of the spring,  
 Too oft before their *buttons* be *disclosed* ;  
 And *in the morn* and liquid dew of youth  
 Contagious *blastments* are most imminent.  
 Be wary, then ; *best* safety lies in fear :  
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else *near*.

*Ophelia.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,  
 Do not, as some *ungracious* pastors do,  
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
 Whilst, like a *puffed* and reckless libertine,  
 Himself the *primrose path* of dalliance treads,  
 And *recks* not his own *rede*.

*Laertes.* O, fear me not.  
 I stay too long :—but here my father comes.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;  
*Occasion* smiles upon a second leave.

*Polonius.* Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for  
 shame !

The *wind sits in the shoulder of your sail*,  
 And you are stayed for. There,—my blessing with  
 you ! [*Laying his hand on LAERTES' head*]

And these few precepts in thy memory  
 Look thou *character*. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
 Nor any *unproportioned* thought *his* act.  
 Be thou familiar, but by no means *vulgar*.  
 The friends thou hast, and ' their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;

*unbradled*

*most heedful*

40 *worm that*  
*preys upon*  
*blossoms*  
*buds*  
*unfolded*  
*blights*  
*(the) best*  
*(be) near*  
*will th' effect*

*graceless*

50 *puffed up, self*  
*confident*  
*follows*  
*counsel*  
*for me (Dative)*

*opportunity*  
*still*

60 *write*  
*unsuitable*  
*its*  
*common*

<sup>1</sup> "Do not advance as far as your affection would lead you" (Johnson).

<sup>2</sup> Tried after having adopted them.

✓ But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,  
Bear't, that *the opposed* may beware of thee.  
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice :  
Take each man's *censure*, but reserve thy judgment.

*th opposed,  
opponent*

*Costly* thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not expressed in fancy ; rich, not gaudy :

70 *opinion  
as costly*

For the apparel oft proclaims the man ;  
And they in France, of the best rank and station,  
Are most select and generous, *chief* in that.  
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be :

*particularly*

For loan oft loses both itself and friend ;  
And borrowing dulls the edge of *husbandry*.  
This above all,—to thine ownself be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,

*economy*

Thou canst not then be false to any man.  
Farewell : my blessing *season* this in thee !

80

*ripen*

*Laertes.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Polonius.* The time *invites* you ; go, your servants  
*tend.*

*summons  
attend*

*Laertes.* Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well  
What I have said to you.

*Ophelia.* 'Tis in my memory locked,  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laertes.* Farewell. [*Exit* LAERTES.]

*Polonius.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

*Ophelia.* So please you, something touching the Lord  
Hamlet.

*Polonius.* Marry, well *bethought* :  
'Tis told me, he hath very oft *of late*  
Given private time to you ; and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous :

90

*thought of  
recently*

If it be so,—(as so 'tis *put* on me,  
And that in *way* of caution,) I must tell you,  
You do not understand yourself so clearly,  
As it *behooves* my daughter, and your honour.  
What is between you ? give me up the truth.

*forced  
(the) way*

*Ophelia.* He hath, my lord, of late made many *tenders*  
Of his affection to me.

*bests*

*offers*

100

<i>Polonius.</i> Affection ! pooh ! you speak like a <i>green</i>	<i>inexperienced</i>
<i>girl,</i>	
<i>Unsuited</i> in such perilous circumstance.	<i>untried</i>
Do you believe his <i>tenders</i> , as you call them ?	<i>offers</i>
<i>Ophelia.</i> I do not know, my lord, what I should think.	
<i>Polonius.</i> Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself a baby ;	
That you have <i>ta'en</i> these <i>tenders</i> for true pay,	<i>taken</i>
Which are not <i>sterling</i> . <i>Tender</i> yourself more dearly ;	<i>offers</i>
Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,	<i>true gold</i>
Running it thus,—you'll <i>tender</i> me a fool.	<i>value</i>
<i>Ophelia.</i> My lord, he hath importuned me with love, 110	<i>exhibit</i>
In honourable <i>fashion</i> .	
<i>Polonius.</i> Ay, <i>fashion</i> you may call it ; go to, go to.	<i>manner</i>
<i>Ophelia.</i> And hath given countenance to his speech,	<i>passing fancy</i>
my lord,	
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.	
<i>Polonius.</i> Ay, <i>springes</i> to catch woodcocks. I do	<i>nets, gins</i>
know,	
When the blood burns, how <i>prodigal</i> the soul	<i>lavishly</i>
Lends the tongue vows : <sup>1</sup> these blazes, <i>daughter</i> ,	<i>daugh-er,</i>
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,	<i>trisyllable</i>
Even <i>in</i> their promise, as it is a-making,—	<i>at the moment</i>
You must not take for <i>fire</i> . From this time	120 <i>dissyllable</i>
Be somewhat scander of your maiden presence ;	
Set your <i>entreatments</i> at a higher rate	
Than a command to parley. <i>For</i> Lord Hamlet,	<i>favours</i>
Believe so much in him, that he is young ;	<i>as for</i>
And with a <i>larger tether</i> may he walk <sup>2</sup>	
Than may be given you. <i>In few</i> , Ophelia,	<i>more liberty</i>
Do not believe his vows ; for they are <i>brokers</i> ,—	<i>in short</i>
Not of that <i>dye</i> which their <i>investments</i> show,	<i>go-betweens</i>
But mere <i>implorators</i> of unholy suits,	<i>appearance</i>
<i>Breathing</i> like sanctified and pious bonds,	<i>dress</i>
The better to beguile. This is <i>for</i> all,—	<i>Solicitors</i>
I would not. in plain terms, from this time forth,	130 <i>whispering</i>
	<i>(once) for</i>

<sup>1</sup> These blazes (*fires of passion*) are like flashes giving more light than heat, and which go out even while the promise is being made.

Have you so slander any moment's leisure,  
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
Look to't, I *charge* you : come your ways.  
*Ophelia.* I shall obey, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

command

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

*Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.*

*Hamlet.* The air bites *shrewdly* ; it is very cold.

*Horatio.* It is a nipping and an *eager* air.

*Hamlet.* What *hour* now ?

*Horatio.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Marcellus.* No, it is struck.

*Horatio.* Indeed ? I heard it not : then it draws  
near the season

Wherein the spirit held his *wont* to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot  
off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* The king *doth wake* to-night, and takes his  
*rouse*,

Keeps *wassail*, and the swaggering *up-spring* reels ;

And, as he drains his draughts of *Rhenish* down,

The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out

The triumph of his pledge.

*Horatio.* Is it a custom ?

*Hamlet.* Ay, marry, is't :

But to my mind,—though I am native here,

And to the manner born,—it is a custom

More honoured in the *breach* than the observance.

✓ This heavy-headed revel, east and west,

keenly

sharp

disyllable

custom

feast late

bumper

revelry

dance staggers

Rhine wine

10

\* These drinking habits of ours cause other nations to overlook our good qualities and to regard us as drunkards. So with individuals : some particular trait (*vicious mole*)—either inherited at birth and therefore no fault of the man, developing (*o'ergrowth*) some disposition that proves too strong for him, or brought about by some bad habit that outweighs (*o'erleavens*) his pleasant manners—no matter if inherited (*nature's livery*) or an acquired habit (*fortune's star*)—is enough to cause most people to judge the man (*general censure*) by this particular defect, and to overlook his other qualities (*their virtues else*), though they be many (*infinite*) and full of goodness (*pure as grace*).

✓ Makes us *traduced* and *taxed* of other nations :  
 ✓ They *clepe* us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
*Soil* our *addition* ; and, indeed, it takes  
 From our achievements, though performed *at height*,  
 ✓ The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
 So, oft it chances in particular men,  
 That, for some vicious *mole of nature* in them,  
 As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,  
 Since nature cannot choose *his* origin.)  
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
 Oft breaking down the *pales* and forts of reason ;  
 Or by some habit, that *too much o'er-leavens*  
 The form of *plausive* manners ;—that these men,—  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—  
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may *undergo*,)  
*Shall* in the general censure take corruption  
 From that particular fault : the *drum* of *base*  
 Doth all the noble substance often *dout*,  
 To *his* own scandal.

*disgraced*  
*censured*  
*call*  
*defile*  
*little*  
*at best*

*a mark on*  
*the body*  
*its*

*defences*  
*affects too*  
*strongly*  
*pleasing*

*accumulate*  
*will*  
*portion of evil*  
*do out,*  
*destroy*  
*its*

Enter Ghost.

Horatio.

Look, my lord ! it comes.

Hamlet. Angels and ministers of grace, defend us !  
 Be thou a *spirit* of health, or goblin damned,  
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,  
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,  
 Thou com'st in such a *questionable* shape,  
 That I will speak to thee : I'll call thee Hamlet,  
 King, Father, Royal Dane : O, answer me !  
 ✓ Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell  
 ✓ Why thy canonized bones, *hearsed* in death,  
 ✓ Have burst their *cerements* ; why the sepulchra,  
 ✓ Wherein we saw thee quietly *in-urned*,  
 ✓ Hath *op'd* his ponderous and marble jaws,  
 To cast thee up again ! What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous ; and *we* fools of nature,

40 1 syllable

*that may be*  
*spoken with*

*entombed*  
*wrapping for*  
*the dead*  
*interred*  
*opened*

50 us

So horridly to shake our *disposition*,  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[The Ghost beckons HAMLET.]

*Horatio*. It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some *impartment* did desire  
To you alone.

*Marcellus*. Look, with what courteous action  
It waves you to more removed ground:  
But do not go with it.

*Horatio*. No, by no means.

*Hamlet*. It will not speak; then will I follow it.

*Horatio*. Do not, my lord.

*Hamlet*. Why, what should be the fear?  
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;  
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?  
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.

*Horatio*. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my  
lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
And there assume some other horrible form,  
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,  
And draw you into madness? think of it:  
The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain  
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,  
And hears it roar beneath.

*Hamlet*. It waves me still.—Go on; I'll follow thee.

*Marcellus*. You shall not go, my lord.

*Hamlet*. Hold off your hands. 80

*Horatio*. Be ruled; you shall not go.

*Hamlet*. My fate cries out,  
And makes each petty artery in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[Ghost beckons.]

Still am I called:—unhand me, gentlemen;—

[Breaking from them.]

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:—

*nature*

*communica-  
tion*

*beckons  
remote*

70

*juts or hangs  
over*

*take away*

*idle fancies*

*muscle*

*hinders*



I say, away !—Go on ; I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt* Ghost and HAMLET.]

*Horatio.* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Marcellus.* Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Horatio.* Have after.—To what issue will this come ?

*Marcellus.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Horatio.* Heaven will direct it.

*Marcellus.*

Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A more remote Part of the Platform.*

*Re-enter* Ghost and HAMLET.

*Hamlet.* Whither wilt thou lead me ? speak ; I'll go no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Hamlet.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must *render* up myself.

*Hamlet.* Alas, poor ghost !

*Ghost.* Pity me not ; but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Hamlet.* Speak ; I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Hamlet.* What ?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit,  
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,  
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of *nature*,  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am *forbid*  
To *tell* the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul ; freeze thy young blood ;  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres ;  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
And each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like a quills upon the fretful porcupine :

grows

follow

90

the issue

deliver

10

during  
life  
forbidden  
declare

20

But this *eternal blazon* must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood.—*List*, list, O list !  
If thou didst ever thy dear father love——

*Hamlet.* O God !

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

*Hamlet.* Murder ?

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as *in the best* it is ;  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Hamlet.* *Haste* me to know it, that I, with wings as  
swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee *apt* ;

And duller *shouldst* thou be than the fat weed

That rots itself in ease on Lethe *wharf*,

Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :

'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,

A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark

Is by a forgèd *process* of my death

*Rankly* abused : but know, thou noble youth,

The serpent that did sting thy father's life

Now wears his crown.

✓ *Hamlet.* O *my prophetic soul ! my uncle !*

*Ghost.* But, soft ! methinks I scent the morning air ;

Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,

My custom always in the afternoon,

Upon my *secure* hour thy uncle stole,

With juice of cursed *hebenon* in a vial,

And in the *porches* of mine ears did pour

The leperous *distilment* ; whose effect

Holds such an enmity with *blood* of man,

That, swift as quicksilver, it *courses* through

The natural gates and *alleys* of the body ;

And, with a *sudden vigour*, it doth *posset*

And curd, like *eager* droppings into milk,

The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine ;

And a most *instant tetter* barked about,

Most *lazar-like*, with vile and loathsome crust,

All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,

revelation of  
eternity  
listen

at best

quicken

30

ready  
wouldst  
bank

account  
grossly

40

unsuspicious  
henbane  
entrances  
distillation  
(the) blood

50

rushes  
passages  
rapid action  
curdle  
sour

instantaneous  
scab  
covered  
leper

Of life, of crown, of queen, at once <i>despatched</i> :		<i>deprived</i>
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,	60	<i>without</i>
<i>Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd</i> ;		<i>sacrament</i>
No reckoning made, but sent to my account		<i>unprepared</i>
With all my imperfections on my head :		<i>without ex-</i>
O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible !		<i>treme unction</i>
If thou hast <i>nature</i> in thee, bear it not ;		<i>natural</i>
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be		<i>affection</i>
A couch for <i>luxury</i> and damn'd incest.		<i>lust</i>
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this line,		
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy southe contrive		
Against thy mother aught : leave her to <i>heaven</i> ,	70	<i>i.e. punish-</i>
And to those <i>thorns</i> that in her bosom lodge,		<i>ment of</i>
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !		<i>pricks of con-</i>
The glow-worm shows the <i>matin</i> to be near,		<i>science</i>
And 'gins to <i>pale</i> his <i>ineffectual</i> fire :		<i>the morning</i>
Adieu, adieu ! Hamlet, remember me. <i>[Exit.</i>		<i>begins</i>
<i>Hamlet.</i> O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! What		<i>make pale</i>
else ?		<i>ineffectual</i>
And shall I couple hell ?—O fie !—Hold, hold, my heart !		
And you, my sinews, grow not <i>instant</i> old,		<i>instantly</i>
But bear me <i>stiffly</i> up !—Remember thee ?		<i>so as not to</i>
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat	80	<i>bend</i>
In this distracted <i>globe</i> . Remember thee !		
Yea, from the <i>table</i> of my memory		<i>head</i>
I'll wipe away all trivial <i>fond</i> records,		<i>tablet</i>
All <i>saws</i> of books, all forms, all <i>pressures</i> past,		<i>foolish</i>
That youth and observation copied there ;		<i>sayings</i>
And thy commandment all alone shall live		<i>impressions</i>
Within the book and volume of my brain,		
Unmixed with baser matter : yes, by heaven !		
O most pernicious woman !		
O villain, villain, smiling, damn'd villain !	90	<i>tablets</i>
My <i>tables</i> , my <i>tables</i> —meet it is I set it down,		
That one may <i>smile</i> , and <i>smile</i> , and be a villain ;		
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark : <i>[Writing.</i>		
So, uncle, there you <i>are</i> . Now to my <i>word</i> ;		<i>i.e. set down</i>
It is, " Adieu, adieu ! remember me " :		<i>watchword</i>
I have sworn't.		
<i>Horatio.</i> <i>[Within.]</i> My lord ! my lord !		

*Marcellus.* [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!

*Horatio.* [*Within.*] Heaven *secure* him!

*protect*

*Marcellus.* [*Within.*] So be it!

*Horatio.* [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!

*Hamlet.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come. 100

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Marcellus.* How is't, my noble lord?

*Horatio.* What news, my lord?

*Hamlet.* O, wonderful!

*Horatio.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Hamlet.* No;

You'll reveal it.

*Horatio.* Not I, my lord, by heaven!

*Marcellus.* Nor I, my lord!

*Hamlet.* How say you, then; would heart of man  
once think it?—

But you'll be secret?

*Horatio.* { Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Marcellus.* {

*Hamlet.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all  
Denmark

But he's an *arrant* knave.

*Horatio.* There needs no ghost, my lord, *come* from  
the grave

*absolute,  
thorough  
(to) come*

To tell us this.

*Hamlet.* Why, right; you are i' the right; 110

And so, without more *circumstance* at all,

*circumlocution*

I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

You, as your business and desire shall point you;

For every man hath business and desire,

Such as it is:—and, for mine own poor part,

Look you, I'll go pray.

*Horatio.* These are but wild and *whirling* words, my  
lord.

*excited*

*Hamlet.* I am sorry they offend you, heartily;  
Yes, 'faith, heartily.

*Horatio.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio, 120  
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :  
 For your desire to know what is between us,  
 O'ermaster it as you may. And now, good friends,  
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
 Give me one poor request.

*Horatio.* What is't, my lord ? we will.

*Hamlet.* Never make known what you have seen to-  
 night.

*Horatio.* { My lord, we will not.

*Marcellus.* { Nay, but swear't.

*Hamlet.* In faith,

My lord, not I.

*Marcellus.* Nor I, my lord, in faith. 130

*Hamlet.* Upon my sword.

*Marcellus.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Hamlet.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Hamlet.* Ah, ha, boy ! say'st thou so ? art thou there,  
 truepenny ?—

Come on—you hear this fellow *in the cellarage*,—  
 Consent to swear.

*Horatio.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
 Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Hamlet.* *Hic et ubique* ? then we'll shift our ground.— 140

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword :

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Hamlet.* Wells aid, old mole ! canst *work* i' the earth  
 so fast ?

A worthy *pioneer* !—Once more remove, good friends.

*Horatio.* O day and night, but this is *wondrous*  
 strange !

*Hamlet.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth, *Horatio* ✓ 150  
 Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

as for  
 get over it  
 trisyllable  
 grant

i.e. *this cross*

*honest fellow*  
*underground*

*Here and*  
*everywhere ?*

*burrow*

*miner*  
*wondrously*

But come ;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,  
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,  
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet  
To put an *antic* disposition on,—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,  
With arms *encumbered* thus, or this head-shake,  
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,  
As, "Well, well, we know ;"—or, "We could, *an if* we  
would ;" 160

Or, "If we *list* to speak ;"—or, "There be, an if they  
might ;" should please

Or such ambiguous *giving out*, to note  
That you know aught of me :—this not to do,  
So grace and mercy at your *most* need help you.  
Swear. exclamation  
greatest

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Hamlet.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit !—So, gentlemen  
With all my love I do commend me to you ;  
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is  
May do, to express his love and *friending* to you, 170 *friendliness*  
God willing, shall not *lack*. Let us go in together ;  
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
*The time is out of joint :—O cursèd spite,*  
*That ever I was born to set it right !* be lacking  
*utterly disordered*

Nay, come, let's go together. ✓ [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in POLONIUS' House.*

*Enter* POLONIUS and REYNALDO.

*Polonius.* Give him this money and these notes,  
Reynaldo.

*Reynaldo.* I will, my lord.

*Polonius.* You shall do *marvellous* wisely, good  
Reynaldo, will  
marvellously

Before you visit him, to make inquiry  
Of his behaviour.

<i>Reynaldo.</i> My lord, I did intend it.		
<i>Polonius.</i> Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,		by Mary
<sup>1</sup> Inquire me first what <i>Danskers</i> are in Paris ;		for me
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,		Danes
What company, at what expense ; and finding,		
By this <i>encompassment</i> and <i>drift of question</i> ,	10	circumvention
That they do know my son, <sup>2</sup> come you more nearer		indirect means
Than your <i>particular demands</i> will touch it ;		direct ques-
<i>Take you</i> , as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him ;		tions
As thus, " I know his father, and his friends,		assume
And, <i>in part</i> , him ;"—do you mark this, Reynaldo ?		partly
<i>Reynaldo.</i> Ay, very well, my lord.		
<i>Polonius.</i> " And, in part, him ; but," you may say,		
" not well :		
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild ;		
<i>Addicted</i> so and so ;"—and there <i>put on</i> him		inclined to
What forgeries you please ; marry, none so <i>rank</i>	20	attribute to
As may dishonour him ; take heed of that ;		gross
But, sir, such <i>wanton</i> , wild, and usual <i>slips</i>		unrestrained
As are companions noted and most known		shortcomings
To youth and liberty.		
<i>Reynaldo.</i> As gaming, my lord ?		
<i>Polonius.</i> Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrel-		
ling,		
Drabbing ;—you may go so far.		
<i>Reynaldo.</i> My lord, that would dishonour him.		
<i>Polonius.</i> 'Faith, no ; as you may <i>season</i> it in the		represent
charge,		
You must not put <i>another</i> scandal on him,		an additional
That he is open to incontinency ;	30	
That's not my meaning : but <i>breathe</i> his faults so		whisper
<i>quaintly</i>		ingeniously
That they may seem the <i>taints</i> of <i>liberty</i> ;		blemishes
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind ;		freed disposition

<sup>1</sup> Get to know what Danes (*Danskers*) are in Paris, and how they live (*how*), with whom they associate (*who*), what their fortune is (*what means*), where they lodge (*keep*), what company they frequent (*what company*), and at what cost (*expense*).

<sup>2</sup> By this roundabout and indirect inquiry you will arrive much nearer to the truth than you possibly could by direct questions.

A savageness in <i>unreclaimed</i> blood, Of general assault.		<i>untamed</i>
<i>Reynaldo.</i> But, my good lord,—		
<i>Polonius.</i> Wherefore should you do this?		
<i>Reynaldo.</i> Ay, my lord,	2 syllables	
I would know that.		
<i>Polonius.</i> Marry, sir, here's my <i>drift</i> ;	<i>meaning</i>	
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant :		
You laying these slight <i>sullies</i> on my son,	<i>stains</i>	
As 'twere a thing a little <i>soiled</i> i' the working,	40 <i>defiled</i>	
Mark you,		
' Your party in converse, <i>him</i> you would sound,	<i>he whom</i>	
Having ever seen in the <i>prenominate</i> crimes	<i>forenamed</i>	
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured,		
He <i>closes</i> with you <i>in this consequence</i> ;	<i>concludes</i>	
" Good sir," or so ; or " friend," or " gentleman,"—	<i>as follows</i>	
According to the phrase, or the <i>addition</i> ,	<i>title</i>	
Of main, and country.		
<i>Reynaldo.</i> Very good, my lord.		
<i>Polonius.</i> And then, sir, does he this,—he does—		
What was I about to say ?	50	
I was about to say something :—where did I <i>leave</i> ?	<i>leave off</i>	
<i>Reynaldo.</i> At " closes in the consequence,"		
At " friend or so," and " gentleman."		
<i>Polonius.</i> At " closes in the consequence,"—ay, <i>marry</i> ;	<i>by Mary</i>	
He closes with you thus :—" I know the gentleman ;		
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,		
Or then, or then ; with such, or such ; and, as you say,		
There was he gaming ; there <i>o'ertook in's rouse</i> ;	<i>overtaken in</i>	
There falling out at tennis ;" or so forth.—	<i>his bumper,</i>	
See you now ;	60 <i>i.e. intoxicated</i>	
' Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth :		
' And thus do we of wisdom and of <i>reach</i> ,	<i>by means of</i>	
	<i>forethought</i>	

1 And so if the person you are conversing with, he whom you would sound, has ever seen my son commit any of the aforesaid faults, he will be led on in natural sequence to end by saying, " Good sir," etc.

2 As a fish (*carp*) is taken by a bait, so these men, swallowing your insinuating talk (*bait of falsehood*), will tell it to the world as if true.

3 We find the direct way to what we desire by means of wisdom and forethought, and by using roundabout methods and experiments such as we would employ to ascertain the effect of bias upon the course of a bowl.



With windlasses, and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out :

So, by my former lecture and advice,

Shall you my son. You have me, have you not ?

Reynaldo My lord, I have.

Polonius. God be wi' you ; fare you well.

Reynaldo. Good my lord !

Polonius. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Reynaldo. I shall, my lord.

Polonius. And let him ply his music.

Reynaldo. Well, my lord.

Polonius. Farewell ! [Exit REYNALDO.]

Enter OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia ! what's the matter ?

Ophelia. Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted !

Polonius. With what, in the name of God ?

Ophelia. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,

Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbraced ;

No hat upon his head ; his stockings fouled,

Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ancle ;

Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;

And with a look so piteous in purport,

As if he had been loosed out of hell

To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Polonius. Mad for thy love ?

Ophelia. My lord, I do not know ;

But, truly, I do fear it.

Polonius. What said he ?

Ophelia. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard ;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm ;

And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,

He falls to such perusal of my face,

As he would draw it. Long stayed he so ;

At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,

And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,

That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,

And end his being : that done, he lets me go :

And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd

roundabout  
ways  
indirect  
attempts  
indirect  
methods  
i.e. find out  
understand  
with

practise dils  
gently

terrified

private room  
unfastened

slipped down

meaning

in order to

careful  
examination  
as if

body

He seemed to find his way without his eyes ;  
For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

*Polonius.* Come, go with me : I will go seek the king.

This is the very *ecstasy* of love ;  
Whose violent property *for*does itself,  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.—

What, have you given him any *hard words* of late ?

*Ophelia.* No, my good lord ; but, as you did command.

I did *repel* his letters, and denied

His access to me.

*Polonius.* That hath made him mad.

I am sorry that with better heed and judgment

I had not *quoted* him : I feared he did but trifle,

And meant to *wreck* thee ; but, beshrew my *jealousy* !

It seems, it is as *proper* to our age

To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,

As it is common for the younger *sort*

To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king :

This must be *known* ; which, being kept close, might  
move

<sup>1</sup> More grief to *hide*, than *hate* to utter love.

[*Exeunt.*]

# SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle.

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,  
and Attendants.

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern !

Moreover that we much did long to see you,

The need we have to use you did *provoke*

Our hasty *sending*. Something have you heard

Of Hamlet's transformation ; so I call it,

Since *nor* the exterior nor the inward man

Resembles that it was. What it should be,

100 *madness  
destroys*

*harsh answers*

*send back*

110 *noted  
ruin  
suspicion  
appropriate*

*kind*

*revealed*

*by hiding  
by disclosing*

*besides  
incite  
summons*

*neither*

<sup>1</sup> Hamlet's madness would cause more grief if concealed than the revelation of his affection for Ophelia cause resentment (*i.e.* on the part of the king and queen).

More than his father's death, that thus hath put him  
 So much from the understanding of himself,  
 I cannot dream of : I entreat you both,  
 That, being of so young days brought up with him,  
 And since so neighboured to his youth and humour,  
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
 Some little time : so by your companies  
 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,  
 So much as from occasion you may glean,  
 Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,  
 That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you ;  
 And, sure I am, two men there are not living  
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you  
 To show us so much gentry and good will  
 As to expend your time with us a while,  
 ' For the supply and profit of our hope,  
 Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
 As fits a king's remembrance.

Rosencrantz. Both your majesties  
 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
 Put your dread pleasures more into command  
 Than to entreaty.

Guildestern. But we both obey,  
 And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,  
 To lay our service freely at your feet,  
 And be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildestern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildestern and gentle Rosencrantz :  
 And I beseech you instantly to visit  
 My too much changed son ; go, some of you,  
 And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guildestern. Heavens make our presence, and our  
 practices,  
 Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen. Ay, amen !

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and  
 some Attendants.]

10

from childhood  
 of = from  
 near his age  
 like him in dis  
 position  
 promise to stay  
 companionship  
 circumstances  
 anything  
 when known

20

courtesy  
 spend

visit  
 token of grate-  
 tude  
 over

30

inclination or  
 intention

conduct

Replacement

"As the means and for the furtherance of what we hope to accomplish" (Hunter).

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Polonius.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,  
Are joyfully returned. 40

*King.* Thou *still* hast been the father of good news.

*Polonius.* Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God, and to my gracious king :  
And I do think (or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so *sure*  
As it hath used to do) that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* O, speak of that ; that do I long to hear.

*Polonius.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors ;  
My news shall be the *fruit* to that great feast.

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found  
The head and source of all your son's *distemper*.

*Queen.* I *doubt*, it is no other but *the main*,  
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

*King.* Well, we shall sift him.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends !

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother *Norway*?

*Voltimand.* Most fair return of greetings, and desires : 60

*Upon our first*, he sent *out* to suppress  
His nephew's levies ; which to him appeared  
To be a preparation 'gainst the *Polack* ;  
But, better looked into, he truly found  
It was against your highness : whereat grieved,—  
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,  
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests  
On Fortinbras ; which he, *in brief*, obeys ;  
Receives rebuke from *Norway* ; and, in fine,  
Makes vow before his uncle, never more

ever,  
constantly  
liege lord

surely

dessert

ill-health  
suspect  
the main cause

king of

at once  
issued orders

Pole

disbanded  
(he) sends  
in short  
king of

To give the <i>assay of arms</i> against your majesty.	make trial of
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,	battle
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual <i>fee</i> ;	reward
And his <i>commission</i> to employ those soldiers,	authority
So levied as before, against the <i>Polack</i> :	Pole
With an entreaty, herein further shown, [ <i>Giving a paper.</i> ]	passage
That it might please you to give quiet <i>pass</i>	
Through your dominions for this enterprise,	
On such regards of safety and allowance	
As therein are set down.	
<i>King.</i> It <i>likes</i> us well ;	90 pleases
And, at <i>our more considered time</i> , we'll read,	greater leisure
Answer, and think upon this business.	
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labour :	
Go to your rest ; at night we'll feast together :	
Most welcome home.	
[ <i>Exeunt</i> VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]	
<i>Polonius.</i> This business is well ended.	
My <i>liege</i> , and madam, to <i>expostulate</i>	liege lord
What majesty <i>should</i> be, what duty is,	enlarge upon
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,	ought to
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.	
Therefore, since <i>brevity is the soul of wit</i> ,	90 essence
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,	wisdom
I will be brief :—your noble son is mad :	
Mad call I it ; for, to define true madness,	
What is't but to be nothing else but mad ?	
But let that <i>go</i> .	pass
<i>Queen.</i> ' More matter, with less <i>art</i> .	ingenuity
<i>Polonius.</i> Madam, I swear I use no <i>art</i> at all.	
That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true 'tis pity,	
And pity 'tis 'tis true : a foolish figure ;	
But farewell it, for I will use no <i>art</i> .	
Mad let us grant him, then : and now <i>remains</i> ,	100 (it) remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,—	
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,	
For this effect <i>defective</i> comes by cause ;	really a defect

Give some more definite information ; do not exhibit such ingenuity in explanation (i.e. come to the point).

Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

*Perpend.*

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—

Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,

Hath given me *this*: now, *gather*, and surmise.

*consider*

*i.e. letter  
come round me*

*endowed with  
beauty*

✓ [Reads.] "To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most *beautified* Ophelia,"—

110

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase, "*beautified*" is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

[Reads.] "In her excellent white bosom, these," etc.—

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her?

*Polonius.* Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

[Reads.] "Doubt thou the stars are fire;  
Doubt that the sun doth move;  
*Doubt* truth to be a liar;  
But never doubt I love.

*suspect*

"O dear Ophelia, I am *ill* at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O *most best*, believe it. Adieu.

*unskilled  
verse-making  
number  
Double sup.*

"Thine evermore, most dear lady,

✓ whilst this *machine* is to him,  
HAMLET."

*body  
belongs*

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me;  
And *more above*, hath his solicitings,  
As they fell out *by* time, *by* means and place,  
All given to mine ear.

*in addition  
with*

*King.* But how hath she  
Received his love? •

*Polonius.* What do you think of me?

130

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Polonius.* I would *fain* prove so. But what might you think,

*gladly*

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,  
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,  
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,  
Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,  
If I had played the desk, or table-book;

Or *given my heart a winking*, mute and dumb ;  
Or *looked upon* this love with *idle sight* ;—

What might you think ? No, I went *round* to work,

And my young mistress thus I did *bespeak* :

"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy *sphere* ;

This must not be : " and then I *precepts* gave her

That she should lock herself from his *resort*,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.

Which done, she took the *fruits* of my advice ;

And he, repulsèd, (a short tale to make,)

Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;

Thence to a *watch* ; thence into a weakness ;

Thence to a *lightness* ; and by this declension

Into the madness wherein now he raves,

And *all we* mourn for.

*King.* Do you think 'tis this ?

*Queen.* It may be, very likely.

*Polonius.* Hath there been such a time, (I'd *fain* know  
that,)

That I have positively said, " 'Tis so,"

When it proved otherwise ?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Polonius.* Take *this* from *this*, if this be otherwise : •

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find

Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed

Within the *centre*. •

*King.* How may we try it further ?

*Polonius.* You know, sometimes he walks for hours  
together

Here in the lobby. •

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Polonius.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to  
him :

Be you and I behind an *arras* then ;

*Mark the encounter* : if he love her not,

And be not from his reason fallen thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,

But *keep a farm and carters*.

*King.*

We will try it.

winked at  
encouraged  
foolish ap-  
proval  
straightfor-  
wardly  
address  
position  
instructions  
company

consequences

wakefulness  
mental  
derangement  
(which) we all

gladly

my head  
my shoulder

i.e. of the earth

tapestry  
watch their  
meeting

statesman  
farmer

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

*Queen.* But look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

*Polonius.* Away, I do beseech you, both away : 170  
I'll board him presently :—*O, give me leave.*—

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

*Hamlet.* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Polonius.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

*Polonius.* Not I, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Polonius.* Honest, my lord !

*Hamlet.* Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand. 180

*Polonius.* That's very true, my lord.

*Hamlet.* <sup>1</sup>For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing *carriion*,—Have you a daughter ?

*Polonius.* I have, my lord.

*Hamlet.* <sup>2</sup>Let her not walk i' the sun : *conception* is a blessing ; but not as your daughter may *conceive* :—friend, look to't.<sup>3</sup>

*Polonius.* How say you *by* that ?—[*Aside*] Still harping on my daughter :—yet he knew me not at first ; he said I was a fishmonger : he is far gone, *far gone* : 190 and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* Words, words, words.

*Polonius.* What is the matter, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* Between who ?

*Polonius.* I mean, the *matter* that you read, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says

*accost  
immediately  
I beg pardon*

*excellently*

*dead flesh*

*understanding  
understand*

*with reference  
to  
ever*

*i.e. in love*

*subject matter*

<sup>1</sup> If the sun, though he is a god, by his heat and light breeds maggots in a dead dog which is dead flesh, so no influence, however good, can do otherwise than bring out the vileness of man who is so corrupt a creature.

<sup>2</sup> Do not allow her free liberty : understanding is a blessing, but if you allow your daughter to be free from restraint, she may understand what you would not approve of.



here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes *purging* thick amber and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak *hams*: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not *honesty* to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, *should* be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

*Polonius.* [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Into my grave?

*Polonius.* Indeed, that is out o' the air.—[*Aside*] How *pregnant* sometimes his replies are! a *happiness* that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Hamlet.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part *withal*; except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Polonius.* Fare you well, my lord.

[*Going.* 220

*Hamlet.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

*Polonius.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

*Rosencrantz.* [*To* POLONIUS.] God save you, sir!

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

*Guildenstern.* Mine honoured lord!

*Rosencrantz.* My most dear lord!

*Hamlet.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

*Rosencrantz.* As the *indifferent* children of the earth.

*Guildenstern.* Happy in that we are not overhappy; 230 On Fortune's cap we are not the very *button*.

*Hamlet.* Nor the soles of her shoe?

*Rosencrantz.* Neither, my lord.

*Hamlet.* What's the news?

*expelling*

*legs*

*right  
would*

*to the point  
good fortune*

*with*

*ordinary*

*top or tuft*

*Rosencrantz.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Hamlet.* Then is *dooms-day* near: but your news is not true. Let me question more *in particular*: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither? 240

*judgment day  
particularly*

*Guildenstern.* Prison, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Denmark's a prison.

*Rosencrantz.* Then is the world one.

*Hamlet.* A *goodly* one; in which there are many *confines*, *wards*, and *dungeons*, Denmark being one of the worst.

*fine, spacious  
prisons*

*Rosencrantz.* We think not so, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison. 250

*Rosencrantz.* Why, then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

*Hamlet.* O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guildenstern.* Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Hamlet.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Rosencrantz.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy 260 and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Hamlet.* 'Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and *outstretched* heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my *ay*, I cannot *reason*.

*ambitious  
(go) to  
faith  
argue with you  
attend*

*Rosencrantz.* { We'll wait upon you.

*Guildenstern.* {

*Hamlet.* No such matter: I will not *sort* you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully *attended*. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what *make you at* Elsinore? 270

*class*

*i.e. by sad  
thoughts  
brings you to*

1 If ambition is a shadow, then beggars (men without ambition) are the only real bodies, whilst monarchs and heroes (ambitious men) are only shadows.

*Rosencrantz.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Hamlet.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

*Guildestern.* What should we say, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Why any thing,—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Rosencrantz.* To what end, my lord?

*Hamlet.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

*Rosencrantz.* [Aside to GUILDENSTERN] What say you?

*Hamlet.* [Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guildestern.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Hamlet.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. (I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the Earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; 310

business

(at) a  
accord  
unsolicited  
visit

only (speak) to  
the point

galliate

for what  
purpose  
since we were  
brought up  
together  
more skilful  
pleader  
frank, fair  
straightfor-  
ward

upon

anticipate  
disclosure  
not be violated  
abandoned my  
usual  
exercises

barren  
splendidly  
ornamented  
adorned

i.e. wonderful  
mental power  
exactly adapted

pattern  
highest essence

no, nor woman neither, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

*Rosencrantz.* My lord, there was *no such stuff* in my thoughts.

*Hamlet.* Why did you laugh, then, when I said "man delights not me"?

*Rosencrantz.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what *Lenten* entertainment the players shall receive from you: we *coted* them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service. 320

*Hamlet.* He that plays the king shall be welcome,—his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his *foil* and *target*; the lover shall not sigh *gratis*; the *humorous* man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are *tickled o' the sere*; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

*Rosencrantz.* Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city. 330

*Hamlet.* 'How *chances* it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Rosencrantz.* I think, their *inhibition* comes by the means of the *late innovation*.

*Hamlet.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so *followed*?

*Rosencrantz.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Hamlet.* How comes it? Do they grow *rusty*?

*Rosencrantz.* 'Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an *aiery* of children, 340 little *eyases*, that cry out on the *top of question*, and are most *tyrannically* clapped for't! these are now the

*nothing of the kind*

*scanty, spare passed by*

*sword shield without reward capricious*

*easily set laughing*

*Copenhagen happens (verb)*

*legal prohibition lately passed injunction*

*run after careless brood of an eagle nestlings top of their voices loudly applauded*

\* How does it happen that they are a strolling company? Permanent occupation of a theatre would bring them more profit and higher reputation.

2 No, they do their best (*endeavour*) to act as well as ever (*keep their wonted pace*); but there is a company (*aiery*) of boy-actors (*eyases*) who shriek out their parts at the highest pitch of their voices, and are vehemently applauded. In the plays they act they cry down (*berattle*) the regular actors (*common stages*), so that many men (*wearing rapiers*) hardly dare frequent these theatres on account of the sharp witticisms indulged in by the writers of the plays (*goose quills*).

*Critic* fashion; and so *berattle* the common *stages*, (so they call them,) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

*Hamlet.* What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they *escoted*? 'Will they *pursue* the *quality* no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) 350 their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Rosencrantz.* Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to *tarre* them to *controversy*: there was, for a while, no money bid for *argument*, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

*Hamlet.* Is it possible?

*Guildenstern.* O, there has been much *throwing about of brains*. 360

*Hamlet.* Do the boys *carry it away*?

*Rosencrantz.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules, and his load too.

*Hamlet.* It is not strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make *moves* at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece, for his *picture in little*. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. [Flourish of trumpets within.]

*Guildenstern.* There are the players. 370

*Hamlet.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands,—come: the *appurtenance* of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me *comply* with you in this *garb*; 'lest my *extent* to the players, (which, I tell you, must show fairly outward,) should more appear like

*cry down players*

*paid for follow profession*

*urge them on quarrel the theme, subject*

*controversy win the day*

*grimaces in miniature*

*proper accompaniment link arms fashion condescension*

<sup>1</sup> Will these boys only follow the profession of actor as long as they are in a choir? When older will they not most likely become regular actors? The playwrights are putting them in the false position of causing them to declaim against a profession which they will eventually adopt.

<sup>2</sup> Lest it should appear that my reception (*extent*) of the players, whom I must greet cordially, is more hearty than that I give to you.

entertainment than yours. You are welcome : but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guildestern.* In what, my dear lord ?

*Hamlet.* I am but mad north-north-west : when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

380

heron

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Polonius.* Well be with you, gentlemen !

be (it)

*Hamlet.* Hark you, Guildenstern ;—and you too ;—at each ear a hearer : that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

clothes

perchance

*Rosencrantz.* Happily he's the second time come to them ; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

*Hamlet.* I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players ; mark it.—You say *right*, sir : o' Monday morning ; 'twas so, indeed.

rightly

*Polonius.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

390

*Hamlet.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Polonius.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Hamlet.* *Buz, buz !*

state news

*Polonius.* Upon my honour,—

*Hamlet.* Then came each actor on his ass,—

*Polonius.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited : 400 Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. <sup>1</sup> For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

*Hamlet.* O Jephthah, Judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou !

*Polonius.* What a treasure had he, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* Why,

“ One fair daughter and no more,  
The which he loved *passing* well.”

very

<sup>1</sup> *Either*, These (Seneca and Plautus) are the standards of dramatic rule (*law of writ*) and licence (*liberty*) to vary it ;

*Or*, These (the players) are the best actors of written drama (*law of writ*), or of improvising (*liberty*) = “ to gag ” in present theatrical language.

*Polonius.* [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

*Hamlet.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

*Polonius.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Hamlet.* Nay, that follows not.

*Polonius.* What fellows, then, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Why,

"As by lot, God wot."

And then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was."—

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more ;  
for look, where my *abridgment* comes.

*Enter four or five Players.*

You are welcome, masters ; welcome, all :—I am glad to see thee well :—welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend ! Thy face is *valanced* since I saw thee last ; com'st thou to *beard* me in Denmark ?—What, my young lady and mistress ! By'r lady, your ladyship is *nearer heaven* than when I saw you last, by the *altitude* of a *chopine*. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not *cracked within the ring*.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see : we'll have a speech *straight* : 430 come, give us a taste of your *quality* ; come, a *passionate* speech.

*1st Player.* What speech, my lord ?

*Hamlet.* I heard thee speak *me* a speech once,—but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not thê million ; 'twas *caviare* to the *general* : but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters *cried in the top of mine*) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much *modesty* as cunning. I 440 remember one said, there were no *sallets* in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might *indict* the author of affectation ; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly

*always*

419

*verse*

420

*what puts an end to my remarks*

*bearded*

*set at defiance*

*taller*

*thickness*

*shoe with*

*wooden sole*

*broken voice*

*straightway*

*professional*

*skill*

*full of feeling*

*to me (dative)*

*unappreciated*

*by*

*the public*

*surpassed*

*simplicity*

*savoury herbs,*

*i.e. ribaldry*

*convict*

loved : 'twas *Aeneas'* tale to Dido ; and *thereabout* of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line ;—let me see, let me see ;—

*that part (noun)*

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the *Hyrcanian beast*,"

450 *tiger*

—'tis not so :—it begins with Pyrrhus :—

"The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose *sable* arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
When he lay couchèd in the *ominous* horse,  
Hath now this dread and black complexion smeared  
With heraldry more dismal : head to foot  
Now is he *total gules* ; horridly *tricked*  
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons ;  
Baked and *impasted* with the parching streets,  
That lend a *tyrannous* and damnèd light  
To their vile murders : roasted in wrath and fire,  
And thus *o'er-sized* with *coagulate gore*,  
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

*black*

*fatal*

*all red (bloody)  
painted*

*covered with a  
paste  
pitiless*

*smeared  
dried blood*

So proceed you.

*Polonius.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken ; with good accent, and good discretion.

*1st Player.*

"*Anon*, he finds him,

*soon*

Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword,  
*Rebellious* to his arm, lies where it falls,

470 *refusing to obey*

Repugnant to command : *unequal* matched,

*unequally*

Pyrrhus at Priam *drives* ; in rage strikes wide ;

*strikes*

But with the whiff and wind of his *fell* sword

*cruel*

The *unnerved* father falls. Then *senseless* Ilium,

*feeble*

Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top

*though with-*

Stoops to *his* base, and with a hideous crash

*out life*

*Takes prisoner* Pyrrhus' ear : for lo ! his sword,

*strikes on*

Which was *declining* on the *milky* head

*descending*

Of reverend Priam, seemèd i' the air to stick :

*white-haired*

So, as a *painted* tyrant, Pyrrhus stood ;

480 *as in a picture*

' And like a neutral to his will and matter,

Did nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Unable to decide between his will and that upon which he would vent his anger.



But, as we often see, *against* some storm,  
A silence in the heavens, the *rack* stand still,  
The bold winds speechless, and the *orb* *below*  
As *hush* as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
Doth rend the *region* ; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,  
Arousèd vengeance sets him new a-work ;  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars's armour, forged for *proof eterne*,  
With less *remorse* than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! All you gods,  
In general *synod*, take away her power ;  
Break all the spokes and *fellies* from her wheel,  
And bowl the round *nave* down the hill of heaven,  
As low as to the fiends ! ”

*Polonius*. This is too long.

*Hamlet*. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—  
Pr'ythee, say on ;—he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or 500  
he sleeps :—say on ;—come to Hecuba.

1st *Player*. “ But who, O, who had seen the *mobled*  
queen——”

*Hamlet*. “ The mobled queen ” ?

*Polonius*. That's good ; “ mobled queen ” is good.

1st *Player*. “ Run barefoot up and down, *threat'ning*  
the flames

With *bisson rheum* ; a *clout* upon that head  
Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,  
About her lank and all *o'er-teemed* loins,  
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;  
*Who* this had seen, with tongue in *venom* steeped, 510  
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced :  
But if the gods themselves did see her then,  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
The *instant* burst of clamour that she made  
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)  
Would have made *milch* the burning eyes of heaven,  
And *passion* in the gods.”

*Polonius*. Look, whether he has not *turned* his colour,  
and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee, no more. 520

before  
clouds  
earth  
silent  
sky

490 always impene-  
trable  
pity

council  
felloes  
hub of the  
wheel

muffled up

(i.e. to put out)

blinding tears  
cloth—a rag  
in place of  
exhausted

anyone who

in the act of  
immediate

milk-giving,  
i.e. tearful  
compassionate  
changed

*Hamlet.* 'Tis well ; I'll have thee *speake out the rest* soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well *bestowed* ? Do you hear, let them be well *used* ; for they are the *abstracts*, and brief *chronicles*, of the time :  
'after your death *you were better have* a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

*Polonius.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Hamlet.* God's bodykins, man, much better : use every man *after his desert*, and who should 'scape whipping ?<sup>530</sup> Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Polonius.* Come, sirs.

*Hamlet.* Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-morrow.—[*Exit* POLONIUS, with all the Players except the first.] Dost thou hear me, old friend ; can you play the murder of Gonzago ?

*1st Player.* Ay, my lord.

*Hamlet.* We'll have it to-morrow night. You could,<sup>540</sup> *for a need*, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I *would* set down and insert in't, could you not ?

*1st Player.* Ay, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Very well.—Follow that lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* 1st Player.] [*To* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN] My good friends, I'll leave you till night : you are welcome to Elsinore.

*Rosencrantz.* Good my lord !

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

*Hamlet.* Ay, so, God be wi' you !—Now I am alone. 550  
O, what a rogue and *peasant slave* am I !  
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own *conceit*,  
That, from *her* working, all his visage *wanned*,  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

complete the  
speech

lodged  
treated  
summaries  
records  
had better have

according to  
merits

if it is neces-  
sary  
should like to

with  
wretched bond-  
man

conception  
i.e. the soul's  
turned pale

<sup>1</sup> A bad character during life is worse than a bad epitaph.

<sup>2</sup> *Conceit* = conception of the part he is playing.

A broken voice, and his whole <i>function</i> suiting With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing ! For Hecuba !		<i>faculty of action</i>
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba.	560	
That he should weep for her ? What would he do, Had he the motive and the <i>cue</i> for passion That I have ? He would drown the stage with tears, And cleave the <i>general ear</i> with horrid speech ; Make mad the guilty, and appal the <i>free</i> , Confound the ignorant ; and <i>amaze</i> , indeed, The very faculties of eyes and ears.		i.e. the actor's cue  public ear innocent, free from guilt confound
Yet I, A dull and <i>muddy-mettled</i> rascal, <sup>1</sup> <i>peak</i> , Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause, And can say nothing ; no, not for a king, Upon whose <i>property</i> , and most dear life, A damned <i>defeat</i> was made. Am I a coward ? Who calls me villain ? breaks my <i>pate</i> across ? Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ? <i>Tweaks</i> me by the nose ? gives me the lie i' the throat, As deep as to the lungs ? Who does <i>me this</i> , Ha !	570	irresolute mope the dreamer  very person destruction head  pulls this to me (dative)  suffer it
Why, I should <i>take it</i> : <sup>2</sup> for it cannot be But I am <i>pigeon-livered</i> , and <i>lack gall</i> To make oppression bitter ; or, ere this, I should have <i>fatted</i> all the <i>region kites</i> With this slave's offal : bloody, bawdy villain ! <i>Remorseless</i> , treacherous, lecherous, <i>kindless</i> villain ! O, vengeance !	580	timid without courage made fat kites of the air pitiless unnatural
Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave, That I, the son of a dear father murdered, Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell, Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words, And fall a-cursing, like a very <i>drab</i> , A <i>scullion</i> !	590	dirty woman kitchen wench
Fie upon't ! foh ! <i>About</i> , my brain ! I have heard		get to work

<sup>1</sup> Mope like a dreamer, unquickened by any active thoughts relating to my cause.

<sup>2</sup> For it must be that I am none other than a coward and without that spirit which feels insult bitterly.

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,  
 Have by the very cunning of the scene  
 Been struck so to the soul, that *presently*  
 They have proclaimed their *malefactions* ;  
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
 With most miraculous *organ*. I'll have these players  
 Play something like the murder of my father  
 Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;  
 I'll *tent* him to the quick : if he but *bleach*,  
 I know my course. The spirit that I have seen  
 May be the devil : and the devil hath power  
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and perhaps  
*Out of* my weakness, and my melancholy,  
 (As he is very potent with such spirits,)  
*Abuses* me to damn me : I'll have *grounds*  
 More *relative* than this : the *play's the thing*  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. ✓ [Exit.

*immediately*  
*evil deeds*  
 (5 syllables)  
*instrument*

600  
*probe*  
*start*

*by means of*

*deceives*  
*reasons*  
*conclusive*

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-  
 CRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King*. And can you, by no *drift of circumstance*,  
 Get from him why he *puts on* this *confusion*,  
 Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
 With *turbulent* and dangerous lunacy?

*roundabout*  
*method*  
*assumes*  
*i.e. of mind*  
*disturbing*  
*restless*

*Rosencrantz*. He does confess he feels himself dis-  
 tracted ;

But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

*Guildenstern*. Nor do we find him forward to be  
 sounded ;

But, with a crafty madness, *keeps aloof*,  
 When we would bring him on to some confession  
 Of his true state.

(he) holds off

*Queen*. Did he receive you well ?

10

*Rosencrantz*. Most like a gentleman.

*Guildenstern*. But with *much forcing* of his *disposition*.

*apparent un-*  
*willingness*  
*mood*

<i>Rosencrantz.</i>	<sup>1</sup> <i>Niggard</i> of question ; but, of our demands,	<i>stingy as regards</i>
Most free in his reply.		
<i>Queen.</i>	Did you <i>assay</i> him	<i>test</i>
To any pastime ?		
<i>Rosencrantz.</i>	Madam, it so <i>fell</i> out, that certain players	<i>happene</i>
We <i>o'er-raught</i> on the way ; of these we told him :		
And there did seem in him a kind of joy		
To hear of it : they are about the court ;		
And, as I think, they have already order		
This night to play before him.		
<i>Polonius.</i>	'Tis most true :	
And he <i>beseeched</i> me to entreat your majesties		
To hear and see the matter.		
<i>King.</i>	With all my heart ; and it doth much content me	
To hear him so inclined.—		
Good gentlemen, give him a further <i>edge</i> ,		
And drive his purpose on to these delights.		
<i>Rosencrantz.</i>	We shall, my lord.	<i>urging</i>
[ <i>Exeunt</i> ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]		
<i>King.</i>	Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;	
For we have <i>closely</i> sent for Hamlet hither,		
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here		
<i>Affront</i> Ophelia :		
Her father and myself, (lawful <i>espials</i> ,)		
Will so <i>bestow</i> ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,		
We may of their encounter <i>frankly</i> judge ;		
And gather by him, as he is behaved,		
If't be the affection of his love, or no,		
That thus he suffers for.		
<i>Queen.</i>	I <i>shall</i> obey you.	<i>will</i>
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish		
That your good beauties be the happy cause		
Of Hamlet's <i>wildness</i> : so shall I hope your virtues		
Will bring him to his <i>wonted</i> way again,		
To both your honours.		

<sup>1</sup> We obtained very little of what we tried to draw out of him, but he was very ready in replying to our questions.

*Ophelia.* Madam, I wish it may.

[Exit QUEEN.]

*Polonius.* Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,

We will bestow ourselves.—[To OPHELIA] Read on this book ;

That show of such an exercise may colour  
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—

'Tis too much proved,—that with devotion's visage,  
And pious action, we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

*King.* [Aside] O, 'tis too true ! how smart  
A lash that speech doth give my conscience !  
O heavy burden !

50

*Polonius.* I hear him coming : let's withdraw, my  
lord. [Exit KING and POLONIUS.]

Enter HAMLET.

✓ *Hamlet.* To be, or not to be,—that is the question :  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune,  
'Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them ? To die,—to sleep,—

No more ; and, by a sleep, to say we end  
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation

60

Devoutly to be wished. To die,—to sleep ;—

To sleep ! perchance to dream :—ay, there's the rub ;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,

'When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

Must give us pause : there's the respect

That makes calamity of so long life ;

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,

The insolence of office, and the spurns

70

That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

hide  
in

excuse

being alone

frequently  
appearance of

hindrance

turmoil of life

insolence

insults  
puts up with

✓ Famous speech

<sup>1</sup> "Take arms against a host of troubles which break in upon us like a sea" (C. & W.).

<sup>2</sup> When we have put off this mortal body now coiled round the soul.

When he himself might his *quietus* make  
 With a bare *bodkin*? who would *fardels* bear,  
 To *grunt* and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscovered country, from whose *bourne*  
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
 'And thus the *native hue* of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of *thought*:  
 And enterprises of great *pith* and *moment*,  
 With this regard, their currents turn awry,  
 And lose the name of action.—*Soft you now!*  
 The fair Ophelia!—Nymph, in thy *orisons*  
 Be all my sins remembered.

*Ophelia.* Good my lord,  
 How does your honour for this *many a day*?

*Hamlet.* I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

*Ophelia.* My lord, I have *remembrances* of yours,  
 That I have longed long to *redeliver*;  
 I pray you, now receive them.

*Hamlet.* No, not I;  
 I never gave you *aught*.

*Ophelia.* My honoured lord, I know right well you  
 did;

And with them, words of so sweet breath composed,  
 As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,  
 Take these *again*; for to the noble mind,  
 Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
 There, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Ha, ha! are you *honest*?

*Ophelia.* My lord!

*Hamlet.* Are you *fair*?

*Ophelia.* What means your lordship?

*Hamlet.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty  
 should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Ophelia.* Could beauty, my lord, have better *com-*  
*merce* than with *honesty*?

end his life  
 dagger  
 bundles  
 groan

boundary

80

natural colour  
 anxiety  
 height  
 importance  
 hush  
 prayers

long time

90

keepsake  
 give back

anything

i.e. back again

100

virtuous

intercourse  
 virtue

<sup>1</sup> Resolution loses its natural colour and becomes pale through anxiety.

*Hamlet.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was *sometime* a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Ophelia.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Hamlet.* You should not have believed me; <sup>1</sup> for virtue cannot so *inoculate* our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

*Ophelia.* I was the more deceived.

*Hamlet.* Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself *indifferent* honest; but yet I could accuse *me* of such things, that it were <sup>120</sup> better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my *beck* than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are *arrant* knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

*Ophelia.* At home, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Let 'e doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere *but* in's own house. Farewell. <sup>130</sup>

*Ophelia.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Hamlet.* If thou dost marry, I'll give you this plague for thy dowry,—be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

*Ophelia.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Hamlet.* I have heard of your paintings too, well <sup>140</sup> enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, <sup>1</sup> and nickname God's creatures, and make your *wanton*-

formerly  
proves it

graft

ordinarily  
myself

call

thorough

except

affectation

<sup>1</sup> Virtue cannot be so grafted on our nature as to remove all flavour of our natural badness.

<sup>2</sup> You give wrong names to God's creatures out of affectation, and pretend it is ignorance.



ness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't ; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but *one*, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

i.e. the king

[Exit.

✓ *Ophelia.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ;  
The *expectancy* and *rose* of the fair state,  
' The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down !  
And I, of ladies most *deject* and wretched,  
That sucked the honey of his *music* vows,  
Now see that noble and most *sovereign* reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;  
That unmatched form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with *ecstasy*. O, woe is me !  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

150 hope  
fairest flower  
by  
dejected  
musical  
supreme

madness

*Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;  
Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little,  
Was *not* like madness. There's something in his soul,  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;  
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,  
Will be some *danger* : which, for to prevent,  
I have, in quick determination,  
Thus set it down : he shall with speed to England,  
For the demand of our neglected tribute :  
Haply, the seas, and countries different,  
With *variable* objects, shall expel  
This *something* settled matter in his heart ;  
Whereon his brains *still* beating, puts him thus  
From fashion of himself. What think you *on't* ?

160 Double neg  
brooding  
revelation  
i.e. to me  
anticipate  
(go) to

*Polonius.* It shall do well : but yet do I believe  
The origin and commencement of his grief  
Sprung from neglected love. How now, *Ophelia* !  
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said ;  
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please ;  
But, if you *hold* it fit, after the play

170 various  
somewhat  
always  
of it

<sup>1</sup> Mirror of courtesy and model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves.

Let his queen mother all alone entreat him  
To show his grief : let her be *round* with him ;  
And I'll be placed, so please you, *in the ear*  
Of all their conference. If she *find him not*,  
To England send him ; or confine him where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

180

*plain-spoken  
within hearing  
i.e. his secret*

*King.* It shall be so :  
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.**Enter HAMLET and certain Players.*

*Hamlet.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce it to you, trippingly on the tongue : but if you *mouth* it, as many of *your* players do, I had *as lief* the town-crier spoke my lines. *Nor do not* saw the air too much with your hand, thus ; but use all gently : for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a *temperance* that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a *robustious periwig-pated* fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the *groundlings* ; who, for the most part, *are capable of* nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise : I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Ter-magant ; it out-herods Herod : pray you, avoid it.

*speak bombastically  
well-known  
as soon  
Double neg.*

*self-control*

*violent  
wearing a wig  
audience in the  
pit  
can appreciate*

*1st Player.* I warrant your honour.

*Hamlet.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the *modesty* of nature : for anything so overdone is *from* the purpose of playing ; whose *end*, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own *image*, and <sup>1</sup> the very age and body of the time his form and *pressure*. Now, this overdone, or *come tardy off*, though it make the *unskilful* laugh,

*moderation  
contrary to  
purpose*

*likeness  
character  
fallen short of  
ignorant*

<sup>1</sup> The present age with its principal characteristics.

cannot but make the judicious grieve; the *censure* of the *which* one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of *others*. O, there be *players* that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of 30 Christians, nor the *gait* of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's *journeymen* had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*1st Player.* I hope we have reformed that *indifferently* with us, sir.

*Hamlet.* O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be *of* them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of *barren* spectators to laugh 40 too; though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

*Polonius.* And the queen, too, and that *presently*.

*Hamlet.* Bid the players make haste.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Will you two help to hasten them?

*Rosencrantz.* { We will, my lord.

*Guildenstern.* }

50

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

*Hamlet.* What ho, Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Horatio.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Hamlet.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man As e'er my conversation *coped withal*.

*Horatio.* O, my dear lord,—

*Hamlet.* Nay, do not think I flatter: For what *advancement* may I hope from thee, That no *revenue* hast, but thy good spirits,

*judgment*  
i.e. the  
*judicious*  
i.e. the  
*ignorant*  
i.e. a class of  
*walk*

*workmen*

*tolerably well*

*certain of*  
*foolish*

*immediately*

*encountered*

*prefermen*  
*revenue*

To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flattered?

No, let the *cantied tongue* lick absurd pomp;  
And *crook* the *pregnant* hinges of the knee,  
Where *thrift* may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?

60 *hypocrite*  
*bend*  
*ready*  
*gain*

'Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath sealed thee for herself: for thou hast been

*about*

As one, *in suffering* all, that suffers nothing;  
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blessed are those,  
Whose *blood* and *judgment* are so well co-mingled,  
That they are not a *pipe* for Fortune's finger

*in the act of*  
*cheerfully*  
*bearing*

To sound what stop she please. Give me that man  
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—

*passion*  
*reason*  
*flagrant*

There is a play to-night before the king;  
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,  
Which I have told thee, of my father's death:

70

[*pr'ythee*, when thou seest that act *a-foo*.

*pray thee*  
*being acted*

Even with the very comment of thy soul  
Observe mine uncle: if his *occulted* guilt

*concealed*  
*disclose*

Do not itself *unkennel* in one speech,

80

It is a damnèd ghost that we have seen;

And my imaginations are as foul

*forged*

As Vulcan's *stithy*. Give him heedful note;

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,

And, after, we will both our judgments join

In *ensure* of his *seeming*.

*judgment*  
*appearance*

Horatio.

Well, my lord:

If he steal aught the *whilst* this play is playing,

*time* (noun)

And *'scape* detecting, I will pay the *theft*.

*escape*  
*what is stolen*

Hamlet. They are coming to the play; I must be  
*idle*:

*crazy*

Get you a place.

90

<sup>a</sup> Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, brought up with Hamlet, were the companions of his youth. Horatio was the intimate friend of maturer years, when he could distinguish (the characters) of men.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Hamlet.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet: these words are not mine.

*Hamlet.* No, nor mine now.—[To POLONIUS] My lord, you played once in the university, you say?

*Polonius.* That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

*Hamlet.* And what did you enact?

*Polonius.* I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Hamlet.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

*Rosencrantz.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Hamlet.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

[Lying down at OPHELIA's feet. 110]

*Polonius.* [To the KING] O ho! do you mark that?

*Ophelia.* You are merry, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Who, I?

*Ophelia.* Ay, my lord.

*Hamlet.* O God! your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

*Ophelia.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Hamlet.* So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear 120 black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-

docs  
excellently  
on air

no information  
do not refer to  
me

i.e. what part  
play

company  
await

less than two  
hours ago

by our  
oblivion

horse, whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

*Trumpet sounds. The dumb show enters.*

*Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts: she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [Exeunt.

*Ophelia.* What means this, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Marry, this is *micning mallecho*; it means mischief. 130

*Ophelia.* *Belike*, this show imports the argument of the play.

*Enter Prologue.*

*Hamlet.* We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep *counsel*; they'll tell all.

*Ophelia.* Will he tell us what this show meant?

*Prologue.* For us and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently.

*Hamlet.* Is this a prologue, or the *posy* of a ring?

*Ophelia.* 'Tis brief, my lord. 140

*Hamlet.* As woman's love.

*Enter a King and a Queen.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times had *Phœbus'* cart gone round

Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground;

*secret, insidious mischief, perhaps dumb show theme, subject*

*a secret*

*poetical motto*

*chariot of the sun the sea round*

And thirty dozen moons, with borrowed sheen,  
About the world have times twelve thirties been ;  
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done !

But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
So far from cheer, and from your former state,

That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it *nothing* must :

' For women's fear and love hold quantity ;  
In neither aught, or in extremity.

Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;

And as my *love is sized*, my fear is so :

Where love is great, the *littlest* doubts are fear ;

Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

*P. King.* Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly  
too ;

My *operant* powers their functions *leave* to do :

And thou shalt *live* in this fair world *behind*,

Honoured, beloved ; and, haply, one as kind

For husband shalt thou——

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest !

Such love must needs be treason in my breast :

In second husband let me be accurst !

None wed the second but who killed the first.

*Hamlet.* [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.

*P. Queen.* The *instances*, that second marriage move,

Are base *respects* of *thrift*, but none of love :

A second time I kill my husband dead,

When second husband kisses me in bed.

*P. King.* I do believe you think what now you speak ;

\* But what we do determine, oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory ;

Of violent birth, but poor *validity* :

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree ;

*light*

*ended*

150

*cheerfulness  
am solicitous  
about  
in no way*

*the size of my  
love  
least*

16

*active  
cease  
survive me*

170

*motives  
considerations  
gain*

*strength*

1 "Women's fear and love vary together, are proportionable; they either contain nothing, or what they contain is in extremes" (Abbott)

2 Resolutions are suddenly formed, but are of little strength, and endure only as long as we remember them.

But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.  
*Most necessary* 'tis, that we forget  
 To pay ourselves what to ourselves is *debt* :  
 What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
 The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
 The violence of either grief or joy  
 Their own *enactures* with themselves destroy :  
 Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;  
 Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.  
 This world is not for *aye* ; nor 'tis *not* strange,  
 That even our love should with our fortunes change ;  
 For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
 Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.  
 The great man down, you mark his favourite flies ;  
 The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.  
 And hitherto doth love on fortune tend :  
 For who *not needs* shall never *lack* a friend ;  
 ' And who in want a hollow friend doth *try*,  
 Directly *seasons* him his enemy.  
 But, orderly to end where I *begun*,  
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run,  
 That our devices *still* are overthrown ;  
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :  
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;  
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

*P. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven  
 light !

Sport and repose lock from me, day and night !  
 To desperation turn my trust and hope !  
 An *anchor's cheer* in prison be my *scope* !  
 Each *opposite* that *blunts* the face of joy,  
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy !  
 Both here and hence, pursue me lasting strife,  
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

*Hamlet.* If she should break it now !

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a  
 while ;

*unavoidable*

180 *due*

*resolutions*  
*of*

*ever*  
 Double neg.

190

*has plenty*  
*be without*  
*tests*  
*ripens*  
*begun*

*ever, always*

200

*hermit's*  
*food*  
*highest aim*  
*obstacle*  
*makes pale*

210

<sup>1</sup> If a needy man test a false friend by asking for assistance he will at once turn him (ripen) into an enemy.



My spirits grow dull, and *fain* I would beguile  
The tedious day with sleep.

[Sleeps.

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain ;  
And never come mischance between us twain !

[Exit.

Hamlet. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Hamlet. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the *argument* ? Is there no  
offence in't ?

plot of the play

220

Hamlet. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest ; no  
offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play ?

Hamlet. The mouse-trap. Marry, how ! *Tropically*.  
This play is the *image* of a murder done in Vienna :  
Gonzago is the duke's name ; his wife, Baptista : you  
shall see *anon* ; 'tis a knavish piece of work : but what  
of that ? your majesty, and we that have *free* souls, it  
touches us not : let the *galled* jade wince, our *withers*  
are *unwrung*.

figuratively  
likeness

in an instant  
innocent  
sore-backed  
horse  
shoulders  
sound

230

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Ophelia. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Hamlet. 'I could interpret between you and your *love*,  
if I could see the puppets dallying.

person in love

Ophelia. Still better, and worse.

Hamlet. Begin, murderer : *leave thy damnable faces*,  
and begin. Come : the croaking raven doth bellow  
for revenge.

cease looking  
round

Lucianus. Thoughts black, hands *apt*, drugs fit, and  
time agreeing ;

ready

Confederate season, else no creature seeing :  
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With *Hecate's* ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property  
On *wholesome* life usurp immediately.

240

a dissyllable

healthy

[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.

<sup>1</sup> Like the interpreter of the puppet show, I could put words into the mouths of  
yourself and your lover, if I saw the dolls working.

*Hamlet.* He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.  
His name's Gonzago: the story is *extant*, and written  
in very choice Italian. You shall see *anon* how the  
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Ophelia.* The king rises.

*Hamlet.* What, frighted with false fire !

250

*Queen.* How fares my lord ?

*Polonius.* Give o'er the play.

✓*King.* Give me some light : away.

*All.* Lights, lights, lights !

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

*Hamlet.* Why, let the *stricken deer* go weep,

i.e. *Claudius*

The *hart ungalled* play ;

i.e. *Hamlet*

For some must *watch*, while some must sleep :

uninjured  
keep awake

So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the  
rest of my fortunes *turn Turk* with me,) with two 260  
*Provi-ial roses* on my *razed* shoes, get me a fellowship  
in a *cry* of players, sir :

change for the  
worse  
rosettes  
slashed  
company

*Horatio.* Half a share.

*Hamlet.* A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of *Jove himself* ; and now reigns here

i.e. *my father*

A very, very—*Peacock*.

i.e. *my uncle*

*Horatio.* You might have rhymed.

*Hamlet.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word 270  
for a thousand pound. Didst perceive ?

*Horatio.* Very well, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Upon the talk of poisoning,—

*Horatio.* I did very well note him.

*Hamlet.* Ah, ah !—Come, some music ! come, the  
recorders !

flageolets

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why, then, belike, he likes it not, *perdy*.

Come, some music !

par Dieu  
(by God)

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guildestern.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word 280  
with you.

Dative

*Hamlet.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guildestern.* The king, sir,—

*Hamlet.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guildestern.* Is, in his retirement, *marvellous* *dis-*  
*tempered.*

*marvellously*  
*out of sorts*

*Hamlet.* With drink, sir?

*Guildestern.* No, my lord, rather with *choler.*

*anger*  
*would*  
*Double comp*

*Hamlet.* Your wisdom *should* show itself *more* *richer*,  
to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to 290  
his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more  
choler.

*Guildestern.* Good my lord, put your discourse into  
some *frame*, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*order*

*Hamlet.* I am tame, sir: pronounce.

*Guildestern.* The queen, your mother, in most great  
affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Hamlet.* You are welcome.

*Guildestern.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is  
not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make 300  
me a *wholesome* answer, I will do your mother's com-  
mandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be  
the end of my business.

*sensible*

*Hamlet.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guildestern.* What, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Make you a *wholesome* answer; my wit's  
*diseased*: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall  
command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore  
no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,—

*sensible*  
*a play on*  
*words*

*Rosencrantz.* Then, thus she says: your behaviour 310  
hath struck her into *amazement* and *admiration*.

*perturbation*  
*astonishment*

*Hamlet.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a  
mother!—But is there no *sequel* at the heels of this  
mother's admiration? Impart.

*consequence*

*Rosencrantz.* She desires to speak with you in her  
*closet*, ere you go to bed.

*private room*

*Hamlet.* We shall obey, were she ten times our  
mother. Have you any further *trade* with us?

*business*

*Rosencrantz.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Hamlet.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers. 320

*Rosencrantz.* Good my lord, what is *your* *cause* of

*cause of your*

distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Hamlet.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Rosencrantz.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Hamlet.* Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows,"—the proverb is something *musty*.

*Re-enter the Players, with recorders.*

O, the recorders! let me see one.—To *withdraw* with 330  
you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me,  
as if you would drive me into a *toil*?

*Guildestern.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Hamlet.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this *pipe*?

*Guildestern.* My lord, I cannot.

*Hamlet.* I pray you.

*Guildestern.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Hamlet.* I do beseech you.

340

*Guildestern.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Hamlet.* 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these *ventages*  
with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your  
mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look  
you, these are the stops.

*Guildestern.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Hamlet.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing  
you make of me! You would play upon me; you  
would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the 350  
heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my  
lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is  
much music, excellent voice, in this little *organ*; yet  
cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am  
easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what  
instrument you will, though you can *fret* me, you cannot  
play upon me.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir

state

step aside

net

flageolet

air-holes

instrumen

annoy

*Polonius.* My lord, the queen would speak with you,  
and presently.

360 immediately

*Hamlet.* Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in  
shape of a camel?

*Polonius.* By the mass, and 'tis a camel, indeed.

*Hamlet.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Polonius.* It is backed like a weasel.

shaped like the  
back of

*Hamlet.* Or, like a whale?

*Polonius.* Very like a whale.

*Hamlet.* Then I will come to my mother *by and by*.  
—They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by  
and by.

at once  
indulge  
height  
inclination

*Polonius.* I will say so.

[Exit.

*Hamlet.* "By and by" is easily said. Leave me,  
friends.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, HORATIO,  
and Players.

✓ 'Tis now the very *witching time of night*,  
When churchyards *yawn*, and hell itself breathes out  
*Contagion* to this world : now could I drink hot blood,  
And do such *bitter business* as the day  
Would quake to look on. Soft ! now to my mother.  
O heart, lose not thy *nature* ; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom :  
Let me be cruel, not unnatural :  
I will speak *daggers* to her, but use none ;  
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites ;  
How in my words soever she be *shent*,  
To give them *seals* never, my soul, consent !

midnight  
open wide  
pestilence  
deeds of bitter  
cruelty  
natural  
affection

380

cutting words

reproached  
fulfil

[Exit.

### SCENE III.—A Room in the Castle.

*Enter* KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* I like him not ; nor stands it safe with us  
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you :  
I your commission will forthwith despatch,  
And he to England shall *along* with you :  
The *terms of our estate* may not endure

(go) along  
position as  
king

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow  
Out of his lunacies.

*Guildestern.* We will ourselves provide :  
Most holy and religious fear it is,  
To keep those many many bodies safe,  
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

*get ready*

10

*Rosencrantz.* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
To keep itself from 'noyance' ; but much more  
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest  
The lives of many. The *cease of majesty*  
Dies not alone ; but, like a *gulf*, doth draw  
What's near in with it : it is a *massy* wheel,  
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,  
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
Are mortised and adjoined ; *which*, when it falls,  
Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*annoyance,  
injury  
decease  
of a king  
whirlpool  
massive*

20

*of which*

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this *speedy* voyage ;  
For we will fetters put upon this fear,  
Which now goes too *free-footed*.

*prepare for  
immediate  
unrestrained*

*Rosencrantz.* {  
*Guildestern.* {

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Polonius.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet :  
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,  
To hear the process ; I'll warrant she'll tax him home :  
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,  
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,  
Since nature makes *them* partial, should o'erhear  
The speech, *of vantage*. Fare you well, my liege :  
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,  
And tell you what I know.

*private room  
tapestry  
account*

30

*mothers  
from  
advantage*

*King.* Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;

- Compare Marshall

King repentant?

<p>It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,          A brother's murder ! Pray, can I not,          Though inclination be as sharp as will :          My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;          And, like a man to double business bound,          I stand <i>in pause</i> where I shall first begin,          And both neglect. What if this cursèd hand          Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,          Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens          To wash it white as snow ? <i>Whereto serves mercy</i>  <i>' But to confront the visage of offence ?</i>  <i>' And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,</i>  <i>To be forestall'd, ere we come to fall,</i>  <i>Or pardoned, being down ? Then I'll look up ;</i>  <i>My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer</i>  <i>Can serve my turn ? " Forgive me my foul murder ? "</i>  <i>That cannot be ; since I am still possessed</i>  <i>Of those effects for which I did the murder,</i>  <i>My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.</i>  <i>May one be pardoned, and retain the offence ?</i>  <i>In the corrupted currents of this world</i>  <i>' Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,</i>  <i>And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself</i>  <i>Buys out the law : but 'tis not so above ;</i>  <i>There is no shuffling, there the action lies</i>  <i>In his true nature ; and we ourselves compelled,</i>  <i>' Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,</i>  <i>To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?</i>  <i>Try what repentance can : what can it not !</i>  <i>Yet what can it, when one can not repent ?</i>  <i>O wretched state ! O bosom, black as death !</i>  <i>O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,</i>  <i>Art more engaged ! Help, angels ! make assay :</i></p>	<div style="text-align: right;">40</div> <div style="text-align: right;">intention</div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>hesitating</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>even supposing</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>that</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>of what avail is</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;">50</div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>anticipated</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>advantages</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>what was</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>gained by the</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>offence</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>obtained by</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>wickedness</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;">60</div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>its</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>(are) compelled</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>remains</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>captured</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>bound</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>attempt</i></div>
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<sup>1</sup> To meet sin face to face, and to overcome it.

\* The two occasions of prayer: (1) before the sin, i.e. "Lead us not into temptation"; (2) after sinning—a prayer for pardon.

\* A wealthy offender may bribe the judge (*buys out the law*) and thus put justice aside, for often the prize gained by the crime (*wicked prize*) is so valuable as to be worth a considerable expenditure in bribes.

\* Straight in the face of our offences ; there can be no evasion.

Bow, stubborn knees ; and, heart, with strings of steel, 70  
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !  
 All may be well. [Retires and kneels.

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying ;  
 And now I'll do't :—and so he goes to heaven ;  
 And so am I revenged :—that *would* be scanned :—  
 A villain kills my father ; and, for that,  
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send  
 To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

<sup>1</sup> He took my father grossly, full of bread ;  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as *flush* as May :  
 And how his *audit* stands, who knows, save heaven ?  
 But, in our circumstance and course of thought,  
 'Tis *heavy* with him : <sup>2</sup> and am I, then, revenged,  
 To take him *in* the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and *seasoned* for his *passage* ?  
 No !

Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid *hent* :  
 When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;  
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed ;  
 At gaming, swearing ; or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't ;  
 Then *trip* him, that his heels may kick at heaven,  
 And that his soul may be as damned and black  
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother *stays* :  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

The KING rises and advances.

King. <sup>3</sup> My words *fly up*, my thoughts remain below :  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.

while

must  
inquired into

80

full blown  
final account

a heavy  
reckoning  
were I to take  
in the act of  
prepared  
i.e. from life to  
death  
opportunity

90

trip him up

is waiting for

<sup>1</sup> He murdered my father in the midst of indulgence, unpurified by fasting, and his sins unrepented of.

<sup>2</sup> The fact that I found you in the act of prayer saves your life for a time.

<sup>3</sup> I pray to heaven for pardon, whilst my thoughts are how to compass Hamlet's death. Prayers that are not the expression of the soul's desire can never reach heaven.



SCENE IV.—*The Queen's Room.**Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

*Polonius.* He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him :

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,  
And that your grace hath screened and stood between  
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

*Hamlet.* [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother !

*Queen.* I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not :—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides behind the arras.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Hamlet.* Now, mother, what's the matter ?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Hamlet.* Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Hamlet.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet !

*Hamlet.* What's the matter now ?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me ?

*Hamlet.* No, by the rood, not so :

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife :

And—would it were not so !—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Hamlet.* Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall not budge ;

You go not, till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

*Queen.* What wilt thou do ? thou wilt not murder me ?

Help, help, ho !

*Polonius.* [*Behind.*] What ho ! help ! help ! help !

✓ *Hamlet.* How now ! a rat ? [*Draws.*] Dead, for a ducat, dead ! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

*Polonius.* [*Behind.*] O, I am slain ! [*Falls and dies.*]

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done ?

immediately

free

king's anger  
even  
outspoken

for me (dative)

foolish, crazy

Holy Cross

stir  
mirror

spy

*Hamlet.* Nay, I know not : is it the king ?  
*[Lifts up the arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.]*  
*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this !  
*Hamlet.* A bloody deed ! almost as bad, good mother,  
 As kill a king, and marry with his brother.  
*Queen.* As kill a king ?  
*Hamlet.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word. 30  
*[To POLONIUS]* Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool,  
 farewell !  
 I took thee for thy *better* : take thy fortune ;  
 Thou find'st to be *too busy* is *some danger*.—  
 Leave wringing of your hands : peace ! sit you down,  
 And let me wring your heart : for so I shall,  
 If it be made of penetrable stuff ;  
 If damnèd custom have not brazed it so,  
 That it is proof and bulwark against *sense*.  
*Queen.* What have I done, that thou dar'est wag thy  
 tongue  
 In noise so rude against me ?  
*Hamlet.* Such an act, 40  
 That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;  
 Calls virtue, hypocrite ; takes off the rose  
 From the fair forehead of an *innocent* love,  
 And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows  
 As false as *dicers'* oaths : O, such a deed,  
 As from the body of *contraction* plucks  
 The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
 A rhapsody of words : ' heaven's face doth *glow* ;  
 Yea, this *solidity and compound mass*,  
 With tristful visage, as *against* the *loom*,  
 Is thought-sick at the *vict*. 50  
*Queen.* Ah me, what act,  
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the *index* ?  
*Hamlet.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,  
 The *counterfeit presentment* of two brothers.  
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow ;  
 Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;  
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;

i.e. the king  
 officious  
 dangerous  
 cease

feeling

2 syllables

gamblers'  
 marriage con-  
 tract

blush  
 the earth  
 before  
 doomsday  
 deed

play or drama  
 prologue

picture

1 Heaven blushes at you ; yea, the solid mass of earth, with sorrowful appearance,  
 as if before the day of judgment, is sick with anxiety.

<p>A station like the herald Mercury,  <i>New-lighted</i> on a <i>heaven-kissing</i> hill;  A combination, and a form, indeed,  Where every god did seem to set his seal,  To give the world assurance of a man :</p>	60	<p><i>act of stand-  ing  just alighted  lofty</i></p>
<p>This was your husband. Look you now, what follows :  Here is your husband ; like a mildewed ear,  Blasting his <i>wholesome</i> brother. Have you eyes ?  Could you on this fair mountain <i>leave</i> to feed,  And <i>batten</i> on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?  You cannot call it love ; for, at your age,</p>		<p><i>healthy  cease  grow fat</i></p>
<p>✓ The <i>hey-day</i> in the blood is tame, it's humble,  And waits upon the judgment : and what judgment  Would step from this to this ? ' Sense, sure, you have,  Else could you not have <i>motion</i> : but, sure, that sense  Is <i>apoplexed</i> : for madness would not err ;  <i>Nor</i> sense to <i>ecstasy</i> was <i>ne'er</i> so <i>thrall'd</i>  But it reserved some <i>quantity</i> of choice,  To serve in such a difference. What devil was't  That thus hath <i>cozened</i> you at <i>hoodman-blind</i> ?  Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,  Ears without hands or eyes, smelling <i>sans</i> all,  ' Or but a sickly part of one true sense  Could not so <i>mope</i>.</p>	70	<p><i>passion</i></p> <p><i>emotion  affected with  apoplexy  Double neg  madness  enslaved  portion  cheated  blind man's  buff</i></p>
<p>O shame ! where is thy blush ? <i>Rebellious</i> hell,  If thou canst <i>mutine</i> in a matron's bones,  To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame  When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,  Since frost itself as actively doth burn,  And reason panders will.</p>	80	<p><i>without  be so stupid</i></p> <p><i>rebellion  2 syllables</i></p>
<p><i>Queen.</i> O Hamlet, speak no more.  Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;  And there I see such black and <i>grained</i> spots</p>	90	<p><i>dyed in grain</i></p>

\* You must have the power of feeling, or you could not have emotion ; but your senses must be paralysed : for a madman would not make such a mistake, for his senses are never so much the slave of his madness as not to retain some power of choice, so as to distinguish a contrast so marked as in these two pictures.

\* If any one of your senses had even the slightest portion remaining.

As will not leave their tinct.

*Hamlet.*

Nay, but to live

In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,  
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love  
Over the nasty sty,—

*Queen.*

O, speak to me no more ;

These words, like daggers, enter *in* mine ears ;  
No more, sweet Hamlet !

*Hamlet.*

A murderer, and a villain ;

A slave, that is not twentieth part the *tithe*

Of your *precedent* lord : a *Vice* of kings ;

A *cutpurse* of the empire and the rule,

That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,

And put it in his pocket !

*Queen.*

No more !

*Hamlet.* A king of shreds and patches,—

*Enter Ghost.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious  
figure ?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad !

*Hamlet.* Do you not come your *tardy* son to chide

<sup>1</sup> That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The *important* acting of your dread command ?

O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : this *visitation*

Is but to *whet* thy almost blunted purpose.

But, look, *amazement* on thy mother sits :

O, step between her and her fighting soul ;

*Conceit* in weakest bodies strongest works :

Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Hamlet.*

How is it with you, lady .

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,

That you do bend your eye on vacancy,

And with the *incorporeal* air do hold discourse ?

Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep ;

And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,

*dye, colour*

*greasy*

*into*

*tenth  
former  
cloven  
thief*

100

*dilatory*

*urgent  
performance*

110

*visit  
sharpen  
perturbation*

*imagination or  
conscience*

*incorporeal or  
immaterial*

120

<sup>1</sup> Who, given up to delay and sentiment, neglects to obey your awful command, which calls for instant action.

' Your *bedded* hair, like life in *excrements*,  
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy *distemper*  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ?

*Hamlet.* On him, on him ! Look you, how pale he  
glares !

\* His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones,  
Would make them *capable*.—Do not look upon me,

\* Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects : then, what have I to do

Will want true colour ; tears, perchance, for blood. 130

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this ?

*Hamlet.* Do you see nothing there ?

*Queen.* Nothing at all ; yet all that is I see.

*Hamlet.* Nor did you nothing hear ?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Hamlet.* Why, look you there ! look, how it *steals*  
*away* !

My father, in his habit *as* he lived !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the *portal* !

[*Exit Ghost.*

*Queen.* This is the very *coinage* of your brain :  
This bodiless creation *ecstasy*  
Is very cunning in.

*Hamlet.* Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
And makes as healthful music ; it is not madness  
That I have uttered : bring me to the test,  
And I the matter will *re-word* ; which madness  
Would *gambol* from. Mother, for love of grace,  
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
That not your trespass but my madness speaks :  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

lying flat  
excrecences

disorder

i.e. of feeling

gradually  
vanishes

as when  
door

invention  
madness

repeat in the  
same words  
skip away

' Your hair, lying flat, starts up and stands on end, as if life were suddenly  
infused into a mere excretion.

\* His appearance, together with the cause of it, would put some sense and  
feeling even into stones.

\* Lest by your appeal for pity you turn me away from the accomplishment  
of my stern resolve.

<i>Infects unseen.</i> Confess yourself to heaven :		
Repent what's past ; avoid <i>what is to come</i> ;	150	<i>corrupts or festers future sin manure of stronger growth short-winded</i>
And do not spread the <i>compost</i> on the weeds,		
To make them <i>ranker</i> . Forgive me this my virtue ;		
For in the fatness of these <i>pursy</i> times		
Virtue itself of Vice must pardon beg,		
Yea, <i>curb</i> and <i>woo</i> , for <i>leave</i> to do him good.		<i>bow and beg permission</i>
<i>Queen.</i> O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.		
<i>Hamlet.</i> O, throw away the <i>worser</i> part of it,		Double comp
And live the purer with the other half.		
Good night ; but go not to mine uncle's bed :		
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.	160	
That monster, Custom, who all sense doth eat,		
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,		
That to the use of actions fair and good		
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,		
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,		
And that shall lend a kind of easiness		
To the next abstinence : the next more easy ;		
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,		
' And master the devil, or throw him out		
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night ;	170	
And when you are desirous to be blessed,		
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,		
[ <i>Pointing to</i> POLONIUS.]		
I do repent : but heaven hath pleased it so,		
* To punish me with this, and this with me,		
That I must be <i>their</i> scourge and <i>minister</i> .		<i>of heaven servant stow away account for</i>
I will <i>bestow</i> him, and will <i>answer</i> well		
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.		
I must be cruel, only to be kind :		
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.		
One <i>word</i> more, good lady.		dissyllable
<i>Queen.</i> What shall I do ?	180	
<i>Hamlet.</i> Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :		
Let the <i>bloat</i> king tempt you again to bed ;		<i>bloated</i>
Pinch wanton on your cheek ; call you his mouse ;		

\* Either master the devil once for all, or beat back his attacks.

\* To punish me (Hamlet) by causing me to kill Polonius, and to punish him by making me the instrument of his death.

And let him, for a pair of *reechy* kisses,  
 Or paddling in your neck with his damned fingers,  
 Make you to *ravel* all this matter out,  
 That I essentially am not in madness,  
 But mad in craft. 'Twere *good*, you let him know :  
 For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,  
 Would from a *paddock*, from a bat, a *gib*,  
 Such dear *concernings* hide ? who would do so ?  
 No, in despite of sense and secrecy,  
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,  
 Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,  
 To try *conclusions*, in the basket creep,  
 And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,  
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe  
 What thou hast said to me.

*Hamlet.* I must to England ; you know that ?

*Queen.*

Alack, 200

I had *forgot* : 'tis so *concluded on*.

*Hamlet.* There's letters sealed : and my two school-  
 fellows,—

Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,—  
 They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,  
 And *marshal* me to knavery. Let it work ;  
 For 'tis the *sport*, to have the engineer  
 Hoist with his own *petard* : and it shall go hard  
 But I will *delve* one yard below their mines,  
 And blow them at the moon : O, 'tis most sweet,  
 ' When in one line two crafts directly meet.

This man shall set me *packing* :

I'll *lug* the guts into the *neighbour* room.

Mother, good night. Indeed, this counsellor  
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,  
 Who was in life a foolish *prating* knave.  
 Come, sir, to *draw toward an end* with you.  
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally, HAMLET dragging in  
 the body of POLONIUS.*]

*begrimed*

*disentangle*

*well*

190 *toad  
 old tom-cat  
 concerns*

*unfasten*

*the results*

(*go*) to

*forgotten  
 decided*

*lead  
 policy  
 mortar  
 dig  
 up to*

210 *contriving  
 drag the body  
 neighbouring*

*chattering  
 to finish off*

\* When two crafty persons meet in direct collision.

## ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves :

You must *translate* : 'tis fit we understand them .  
Where is your son ?

*Queen.* [*To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]  
*Bestow this place on us a little while.*

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night !

*King.* What, Gertrude ? How does Hamlet ?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier : in his lawless fit,

Behind the arras hearing something stir,

He whips his rapier out, and cries, "A rat, a rat !" 10

And, in his *brainish apprehension*, kills

The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed !

It had been so with us, had we been there :

His *liberty* is full of *threats* to all ;

To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answered ?

It will be laid to us, whose *providence*

Should have kept *short*, restrained, and out of haunt,

This mad young man : but so much was our love,

We would not understand what was most fit ; 20

But, like the *owner* of a foul disease,

To keep it from *divulging*, let it feed

Even on the *pith of life*. Where is he gone ?

*Queen.* To *draw apart* the body he hath killed ;

O'er whom his very madness, 'like some ore

Among a mineral of metals base,

Shows itself pure ; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away !

*explain their meaning*

*give free passage*

*as to which tapestry*

*imaginary fear*

*sorrowful*

*being at large danger*

*foresight controlled*

*one subject to revealing itself vital parts put away*

<sup>1</sup> Like a vein of precious metal in a mine (or mass of) common metals.



The sun no sooner shall the mountains *touch*,  
 But we will ship him hence : and this vile deed  
 We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
 Both *countenance* and excuse.—Ho, Guildenstern !

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further *aid* :  
 Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,  
 And from his mother's closet hath he dragged him :  
 Go seek him out ; speak *fair*, and bring the body  
 Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Come, Gertrude, we'll *call up* our wisest friends ;  
 And let them know, both what we mean to do,  
 And what's *untimely* done : so, haply, slander,  
 Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,  
 As *level* as the cannon to his *blank*  
 Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our name,  
 And hit the *woundless* air.—O, come away !  
 My soul is full of discord and dismay.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Hamlet.* Safely *stowed*.

*Rosencrantz.* } [*Within.*] Hamlet ! Lord Hamlet !  
*Guildenstern.* }

*Hamlet.* What noise ? who calls on Hamlet ? O !  
 here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Rosencrantz.* What have you done, my lord, with the  
 dead body ?

*Hamlet.* *Compounded* it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Rosencrantz.* Tell us where 'tis : that we may take it  
 thence,

And bear it to the chapel.

*Hamlet.* Do not believe it.

i.e. at dawn

30

support

assistance

gently

summons

40

unfortunately

direct  
its mark

invulnerable

i.e. away

mingled

*Rosencrantz.* Believe what?

10

*Hamlet.* That I can keep your *counsel*, and not mine own. Besides, to be *demand'd* of a sponge!—what *replication* should be made by the son of a king?

*secret*  
*questioned by*  
*reply*

*Rosencrantz.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's *countenance*, his rewards, his *authorities*. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, 20 you shall be dry again.

*favour*  
*offices of*  
*authority*

*Rosencrantz.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Hamlet.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Rosencrantz.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

*Hamlet.* The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

*Guildenstern.* A thing, my lord!

*Hamlet.* Of *nothing*: bring me to him. Hide fox, 30 and all after.

*no value*

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.—Another Room in the Castle.

*Enter KING, attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek *him*, and to find the body. How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose! Yet must not we put the strong law on him: He's loved of the *distracted* multitude, Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes; <sup>1</sup> And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weighed, But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even, This sudden sending him away must seem *Deliberate pause*: <sup>2</sup> diseases, desperate grown,

*Hamlet*  
*untethered*

*senseless*

*a well-con-*  
*sidered plan*

<sup>1</sup> They notice the punishment awarded to the offender, but lose sight of the gravity of the offence.

<sup>2</sup> Desperate diseases need desperate remedies.

By desperate appliance are relieved,  
Or not at all.

10

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

How now ! what hath befallen ?

*Rosencrantz.* Where the dead body is *bestowed*, my  
lord,

strown away

We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he ?

*Rosencrantz.* Without, my lord ; guarded, to know  
your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Rosencrantz.* Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

*Hamlet.* At supper.

*King.* At supper ! Where ?

✓ *Hamlet.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten : 20  
a certain *convocation* of politic worms are *e'en* at him.  
Your worm is your only emperor for diet : we *fat* all  
creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for *maggots* :  
your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but *variable*  
service ; two dishes, but to one table : that's the *end*.

assembly  
just now  
fatten  
i.e. to feed on  
us  
various  
i.e. of us all

*King.* Alas, alas !

*Hamlet.* A man may fish with the worm that hath  
eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that  
worm.

eaten

*King.* What dost thou mean by this ?

30

*Hamlet.* Nothing, but to show you how a king may  
go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius ?

*Hamlet.* In heaven ; send thither to see : if your mes-  
senger find him not there, seek him *i' the other place*  
yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this  
month, you shall *nose* him as you go up the stairs into  
the lobby.

i.e. hell

smell

*King.* [To some Attendants] Go seek him there.

*Hamlet.* He will stay till you come.

40

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—

Which we do *tender*, as we *dearly* grieve  
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence  
With *fiery quickness* : therefore prepare thyself ;  
The bark is ready, and the wind *at help*,  
The *associates tend*, and every thing is bent  
For England.

*Hamlet.* For England !

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Hamlet.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Hamlet.* I see a cherub that sees them. But, come ;  
for England ! Farewell, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Hamlet.* My mother : father and mother is man and  
wife ; man and wife is one flesh ; and so, my mother.  
Come, for England !

[*Exit.*

*King.* Follow him *at foot* ; tempt him with speed  
abroad ;

Delay it not ; I'll have him hence to-night :  
Away ! for every thing is sealed and done,  
That else *leans* on the affair : pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st *at aught*,  
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense,  
Since yet thy *cicatrice* looks raw and red  
After the Danish sword, and thy *free* awe  
Pays homage to us,) thou mayst not *coldly set*  
Our sovereign *process* ; which imports at full,  
By letters conjuring to that effect,  
The *present* death of Hamlet. Do ~~it~~, England ;  
For like the *hectic* in ~~my~~ blood he rages,  
And thou must cure me : till I know 'tis done,  
*Howe'er* my *haps*, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Plain in Denmark.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS and forces, marching.*

*Fortinbras.* Go, captain, from me greet the Danish  
king ;  
Tell him that, by his *licence*, Fortinbras

*hold precious  
heartily  
in hot haste  
favourable  
companions  
wait*

*closely, at his  
heels*

*depends*

*of any value*

*scar of a wound  
unforced  
disregard  
procedure*

*immolate  
fever*

*whatever  
happens*

*permission*

Claims the conveyance of a promised march  
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
'If that his majesty would aught with us,  
We shall express our duty in his eye ;  
And let him know so.

*Captain.* I will do't, my lord.

*Fortinbras.* Go softly on.

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and forces.*]

*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, etc*

*Hamlet.* Good sir, whose powers are these ?

*Captain.* They are of Norway, sir.

*Hamlet.* How purposed, sir, 10

I pray you ?

*Captain.* Against some part of Poland.

*Hamlet.* Who

Commands them, sir ?

*Captain.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

*Hamlet.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,  
Or for some frontier ?

*Captain.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,  
We go to gain a little patch of ground,  
That hath in it no profit but the name.

'To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it ;

Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,

A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Hamlet.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

*Captain.* Yes, 'tis already garrisoned.

*Hamlet.* Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand  
ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw :  
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,  
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without  
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

*Captain.* God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*]

*Rosencrantz.* Will't please you go, my lord ? 30

conduct

presence

slowly

forces  
king of

exaggeration

20

king of  
greater income  
absolutely  
king of  
Poland

settle  
collection of  
priorient  
matter

<sup>1</sup> If the king desires to see me, I will come and pay my respects to him in person.

<sup>2</sup> "I would not cultivate (*farm*) it on the condition of paying only five ducats rental" (C. & W.), or "I would not pay five ducats for the right of collecting (*farming*) its revenues."

*Hamlet.* I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
' If his chief good, and market of his time,  
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.  
Sure, that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and godlike reason  
To *fastidiously* unused. Now, *whether it be*  
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
Of thinking too precisely on the event,  
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,  
And ever three parts coward, I do not know  
Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do";  
*Sith* I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,  
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:  
Witness this army, of such *mass* and *charge*,  
Led by a delicate and tender prince;  
Whose spirit, with divine ambition *puffed*,  
*Makes mouths* at the *invisible* event;  
Exposing what is mortal, and *unsure*,  
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,  
Even for an *egg-shell*. Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great *argument*,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,  
That have a father killed, a mother *stained*,  
<sup>2</sup> Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see  
The *imminent* death of twenty thousand men,  
That, for a *fantasy* and *trick of fame*,  
Go to their graves like beds, <sup>3</sup> fight for a *plot*  
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,

*immediately*

*speech*

grow mouldy  
1 syllable  
cowardly

be done  
since  
large,  
conspicuous  
numbers  
expense  
inspired  
mocks  
unforeseen  
insecure  
i.e. a trifle  
object of  
quarrel

dishonoured  
passion

impending  
imaginary  
point of  
honour  
of ground

<sup>1</sup> His principal aim, and "that for which he sells his time" (Johnson); or "market" may mean "the employment" of his time.

<sup>2</sup> "Provocations which excite both my reason and passion to vengeance" (Johnson).

<sup>3</sup> Contend about a plot of ground not large enough to hold the contestants whilst fighting, and not sufficiently capacious to contain the slain when buried.

Which is not tomb enough, and *continent*,  
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [Exit

receptacle  
2 syllables

SCENE V.—*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Horatio. She is importunate; indeed, *distract*:  
Her mood *will needs be pitied*.

distracted  
calls for pity

Queen. What would she have?

Horatio. She speaks much of her father; says she  
hears  
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her  
heart;

*Spurns enviously* at straws; speaks things in doubt,  
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,  
' Yet the unshaped use of it doth move  
The hearers to *collection*; they *aim* at it,  
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;  
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,  
' Indeed would make one think there might be thought,  
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

kicks  
spitefully

inference  
guess

Queen. 'Twere good *she were* spoken with, for she  
may strew

scan as if one  
word

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Let her come in.—

[Exit HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each *toy* seems *prologue* to some great *amiss*:  
So full of *artless jealousy* is guilt,  
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

trifle  
prelude  
wrong  
ignorant  
suspicion

Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA.

Ophelia. Where is the *beauteous majesty* of Den-  
mark?

queen

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

<sup>1</sup> Listeners attempt to draw some inference from her disjointed speech.

<sup>2</sup> One cannot help thinking that she is brooding over something she is not quite sure about, which fills her with unhappy thoughts

<i>Ophelia.</i> [ <i>Singing.</i> ]	
How should I your true love know	distinguish
From another one?	
By his cockle hat and staff,	shoes
And his sandal shoon.	
<i>Queen.</i> Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?	
<i>Ophelia.</i> Say you? nay, pray you, mark.	what is it you say?
[ <i>Singing.</i> ] He is dead and gone, lady,	30
He is dead and gone;	
At his head a grass-green turf,	
At his heels a stone.	
Oh, oh!	
<i>Queen.</i> Nay, but, <i>Ophelia</i> ,—	
<i>Ophelia.</i> Pray you, mark.	
[ <i>Singing.</i> ] White his shroud as the mountain snow,—	winding sheet
<i>Enter KING</i>	
<i>Queen.</i> Alas, look here, my lord.	
<i>Ophelia.</i> [ <i>Singing.</i> ]	
Larded with sweet flowers;	dressed
Which bewept to the grave did go,	
With true-love showers.	
<i>King.</i> How do you, pretty lady?	
<i>Ophelia.</i> Well, God 'ield you! They say the owl 40	yield or reward
was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are,	
but know not what we may be. God be at your table!	
<i>King.</i> Conceit upon her father.	thinking
<i>Ophelia.</i> Pray you, let's have so words of this; but	
when they ask you what it means, say you this:	
[ <i>Singing.</i> ]	
To-morrow is Saint <i>Valentine's day</i> ,	Feb. 14
All in the morning betime,	early
And I a maid at your window,	
To be your Valentine.	
Then up he rose, and donned his clothes,	50 put on
And <i>drupped</i> the chamber door;	opened
Let in the maid, that out a maid	
Never departed more.	



*King.* Pretty Ophelia!

*Ophelia.* Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

[*Singing.*]

By Gis, and by Saint Charity,  
Alack, and fie for shame!

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Ophelia.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient: 60  
but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should  
lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of  
it; and so I thank you for your good counsel.—Come,  
*my coach!* Good night, ladies; good night, sweet  
ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch, I  
pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.]

O, *this is* the poison of deep grief; it springs  
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,  
' When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions. First, her father slain:  
Next, your son gone; but he most violent author  
Of his own just remove: the people muddled,  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,  
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but *greenly*,  
*In hugger-mugger* to inter him: poor Ophelia  
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,  
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:  
Last, and as *much containing* as all these,  
Her brother is in secret come from France;  
Feeds on his wonder, keeps *himself in clouds*,  
' And wants not *buzzers* to infect his ear  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;  
Wherein necessity, of matter beggared,  
Will nothing stick *our person to arraign*  
*In ear and ear.* O my dear Gertrude, this,  
Like to a *murdering-piece*, in many places

restrain from  
weeping

my carriage

closely  
watch her  
carefully  
scan as if one  
word

70

removal  
unsettled

on account of  
foolishly  
secretly

reason

important

80

his purpose  
hidden  
tale-bearers

to accuse me  
to everybody  
cannon

' Misfortunes never come singly.

' And is not without whisperers who poison his ear with pestilent accounts of his father's death, and having no sure knowledge, they are driven to stick at nothing in accusing me of the murder to everybody.

Gives me superfluous death.

Queen.

[A noise within.

Alack, what noise is this ?

more deaths  
than one

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Where are my *Switzers*? Let them guard the door.

*Swiss*

What is the matter ?

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord :

' The ocean, *overpeering of his list*,

90

*rising over its  
boundary*

Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste

Than young *Laertes*, in a *riotous head*,

*force of riotous  
citizens  
1 syllable*

O'erbears your *officers*. The rabble call him lord ;

And, as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

The ratifiers and props of every word,

*proposal*

They cry, " Choose we ; *Laertes* shall be king ! "

Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,

" *Laertes* shall be king, *Laertes* king ! "

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry ! 100  
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs !

King. The doors are *broke*.

[Noise within.

*broke in*

Enter LAERTES, armed ; Danes following.

Laertes. Where is this king ?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laertes. I pray you, give me leave.

*i.e. to enter  
alone*

Danes. We will, we will.

[They retire without the door.

Laertes. I thank you :—*keep* the door.—O thou vile king,

*guard*

Give me my father ! \*

Queen. Calmly, good *Laertes*.

King. What is the cause, *Laertes*,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like ?

Let him go, Gertrude : do not *fear* our person :

110

*fear for*

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

*in comparison  
with*

\* That treason can but peep to what it would,

\* The ocean swelling over its boundary eats away the flat country.

\* Treason can do nothing more than peep in comparison with what it desires to do, and so compasses but little of its purpose.

Acts little of *his* will. Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed : let him go, Gertrude ;  
Speak, man.

*Laertes.* Where is my father ?

*King.*

Dead.

*Queen.*

But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laertes.* How came he *dead* ? I'll not be juggled  
with !

To hell, allegiance ! vows, to the blackest devil !  
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit !  
I dare damnation : to this point I stand,—  
That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes ; only I'll be revenged  
Most *thoroughly* for my father.

*King.*

Who shall stay you ?

*Laertes.* My will, not all the world :  
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
They shall go far with little.

*King.*

Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty  
Of your dear father's death, is't *writ* in your revenge,  
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,  
Winner and loser ?

*Laertes.* None but his enemies.

*King.*

Will you know them, then ?

*Laertes.* To his good friends thus wide I'll *ope* my  
arms ;

And, like the kind *life-rendering* pelican,  
*Repast* them with my blood.

*King.*

Why, now you speak

Like a *good child*, and a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most *sensibly* in grief for it,  
It shall as *level* to your judgment pierce,  
As day does to your eye.

*Danes.* [*Within.*]

Let her come in.

*Laertes.* How now ! what noise is that ?

*Re-enter* OPHELIA.

*its*

*to die*

120

*thoroughly*

*written*

130

*open*

*giving up her  
own life  
feed*

*dutiful son*

*feelingly  
directly*

140

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,  
 Burn out the *sense* and *virtue* of mine eye!  
 By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,  
 Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!  
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—  
 O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits  
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?  
 Nature is *fine* in love; and, where 'tis fine,  
 It sends some precious *instance* of itself  
 After the thing it loves.

*Ophelia.* [*Singing.*]

They bore him *barefaced* on the bier;  
 Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:  
 And on his grave rained many a tear,—

Fare you well, *my dove*!

*Laertes.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst *persuade*  
 revenge,

It could not move *thus*.

*Ophelia.* You must sing a-down a-down, and you  
 call him a-down-a. O how the wheel becomes it! It  
 is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

*Laertes.* This nothing's more than *matter*.

*Ophelia.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;  
 pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for  
 thoughts.

*Laertes.* A document in madness—thoughts and re-  
 membrance fitted.

*Ophelia.* There's fennel for *you*, and columbines:—  
 there's rue for *you*; and here's some for me: we  
 may call it herb of grace o' Sundays:—O, *you* may  
 wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:—I 170  
 would give you some violets, but they withered all  
 when my father died:—they say he made a good end,—  
 [*Singing.*]

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

*Laertes.* *Thought* and affliction, *passion*, hell itself,  
 She turns to *favour*, and to prettiness.

*feeling*  
*power (of sight)*

*pure, refined*  
 150 *sample*

*face uncovered*

*i.e. Laertes*  
*urge me on to*

*(me) as strongly*

160 *words only, no*  
*sense*

*the king*  
*the queen*  
*the queen*

*anxiety*  
*suffering*  
*grace*

*Ophelia.* [*Singing.*]

And will he not come again ?

And will he not come again ?

No, no, he is dead :

Go to thy death-bed :

He never will come again.

180

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his *poll* :

head

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan :

God ha' mercy on his soul !

waste our  
moans  
have

And of all Christian souls ! I pray God.—God be wi' you !

[*Exit.*]

with

*Laertes.* Do you see this, O God ?

*King.* Laertes, I must *commune with* your grief,

Or you deny *me right*. Go but apart,

share in

Make choice<sup>1</sup> of whom your wisest friends you will,

190

me (dative)  
my right

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me :

<sup>2</sup> If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us *touched*, we will our kingdom give,

implicated

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction ; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,

And we shall jointly labour with your soul

To give it due content.

*Laertes.* Let this be so ;

*His means* of death, his obscure funeral,

200

the means of  
escutcheon  
outward shou

No trophy, sword, nor *hatchment* o'er his bones,

No noble rite, nor formal *ostentation*,

Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,

That I must *call't in question*.

demand an  
inquiry

*King.* So you shall ;

<sup>3</sup> And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.

I pray you go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

<sup>1</sup> Of your wisest friends whom you will.

<sup>2</sup> If they find me implicated (*touched*) in the murder, either having committed it myself (*directly*), or by employing assassins (*collaterally*).

<sup>3</sup> Let the axe of the executioner fall on the offender.

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the Castle.**Enter HORATIO and a Servant.**Horatio.* What are they that would speak with me?*Servant.* Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.*Horatio.* Let them come in. *[Exit Servant.]*I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.*Enter Sailors.**1st Sailor.* God bless you, sir.*Horatio.* Let Him bless thee too.*1st Sailor.* He shall, sir, *an't* please Him. There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am *let to know* it is.*Horatio. [Reads.]* "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour: in the grapple I boarded them; on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear *will* make thee dumb; yet are they,<sup>1</sup> much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

"He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET." 30

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;  
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
To him from whom you brought them.*[Exeunt.]**what manner  
of men**saluted with  
greetings**if it**informed  
looked over,  
i.e. read  
means (of  
access)  
equipment**in desperation**merciful**(which) will**Dative  
more speedily*<sup>1</sup> Inadequate to express the importance of the matter.

SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the Castle.**Enter KING and LAERTES.*

*King* Now must your conscience my acquittance  
seal,

acquittal

And you must put me in your heart for friend,  
*Sith* you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursued my life.

since

*Laertes.* It *well* appears :—but tell me  
Why you proceeded not against these *feats*,  
<sup>1</sup> So *crimeful* and so capital in nature,  
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
You mainly were stirred up.

plainly  
deeds  
criminal

*King.* O, for two special reasons ;  
Which may to you, perhaps, seem *much unsinewed*,  
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,  
Lives almost *by his looks* ; and for myself,  
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)  
She's so *conjunctive* to my life and soul,  
That, as the star moves not but in his *sphere*,  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public *count* I might not go,  
Is the great love the *general gender* bear him ;  
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,  
Convert his *gyves* to graces ; so that my *arrows*,  
Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,  
Would have *reverted* to my bow again,  
And not *where I had aimed them*.

strengthless

on the sight of  
himclosely joined  
orbitaccount, trial  
common peoplefettors  
i.e. schemes  
(against  
Hamlet)  
turned back  
gone to the  
mark

*Laertes.* And so have I a noble father lost  
A sister driven into desperate terms ;  
Whose worth, <sup>2</sup> if praises may go back again,  
Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
For her perfections : but my revenge will come.

*King.* Break not your sleeps for that : you must not  
think  
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,

20

30

<sup>1</sup> In their nature so criminal and deserving the punishment of death.

<sup>2</sup> If I may praise her as she was before her madness.

<sup>1</sup> That we can let our beards be *shook* with danger,  
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more :  
I loved your father ; and we love ourself ;  
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine——

*shaken*

*Enter a Messenger.*

How now ! what news ?

*Messenger.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :  
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

*King.* From Hamlet ! who brought them ?

*Messenger.* Sailors, my lord, they say ; I saw them  
not :

They were given me by Claudio ; he received them 40  
Of him that brought them.

*from*

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them.  
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]

[*Reads.*] "High and mighty, you shall know I am  
set *naked* on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg  
leave to see your kingly eyes : when I shall, first asking  
your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my  
sudden and more strange return.

*alone*

"HAMLET."

What *should* this mean ? Are all the rest come back,  
Or is it some *abuse*, and no such thing ?

*can possibly  
trick*

*Laertes.* Know you the hand ?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's *character* :—"naked,"—50  
And, in a postscript here, he says, "alone."  
Can you advise me ?

*handwriting*

*Laertes.* I'm *lost* in it, my lord. But let him come ;  
It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
"Thus diddest thou."

*perplexed*

*King.* \* If it be so, Laertes,  
As how should it be so ? how otherwise ?  
Will you be *ruled* by me ?

*i.e. to think  
that*

*Laertes.* Ay, my lord ;

*for indeed  
guided*

<sup>1</sup> Danger being so near as to come into our very face.

\* If he be really returned ; but how can he be ? and yet to judge from this letter he must be come back.



So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now returned, 60  
As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
No more to undertake it, I will work him  
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,  
Under the which he *shall not choose but fall* :  
And for his death no *wind of blame* shall breathe ;  
But even his mother shall *uncharge the practice*,  
And call it accident.

*Laertes.* My lord, I will be ruled ;  
The rather, if you could devise it so,  
That I might be the *organ*.

*King.* It falls *right*.  
You have been talked of since your travel much, 70  
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a *quality*  
Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of parts  
Did not together pluck such envy from him,  
As did that one ; and that, in my *regard*,  
Of the unworthiest *siege*.

*Laertes.* What part is that, my lord ?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes  
The light and careless *livery* that it wears,  
Than settled age his *sables* and his *weeds*,  
*Importing* health and graveness.—Two months since 80  
Here was a gentleman of Normandy :  
I've seen myself, and served against, the French,  
And they can well on horseback ; but this gallant  
Had witchcraft in't ; he grew unto his seat ;  
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,  
As he had been *incorpsed* and demi-natured  
With the brave beast : ' so far he *topped* my thought,  
That I, in *forgery* of shapes and tricks,  
Come short of what he did.

*Laertes.* A Norman was't ?

*King.* A Norman.

*Laertes.* Upon my life, Lamond.

*King.* The very same. 90

matured  
scheme  
cannot help  
falling  
breath of  
scandal  
bring no charge  
against me  
plot  
instrument,  
means  
exactly

accomplish-  
ment

opinion  
seat or rank

dress  
robes  
denoting

incorporate  
surpassed  
imagination

1 So far did he exceed my imagination that I, in conceiving all possible shapes and manœuvres, etc.

*Laertes.* I know him well : <sup>1</sup> he is the brooch, indeed,  
And gem of all the nation.

*King.* He made confession of you ;  
And gave you such a masterly report  
For art and exercise in your defence,  
And for your rapier most especially,  
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed  
If one could match you : the *scrimers* of their nation,  
He swore, had neither *motion*, guard, nor eye,  
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his  
'Did Hamlet so envenom with *his envy*,  
That he could nothing do but wish and beg  
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
Now, out of this——

*Laertes.* What out of this, my lord ?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you ?  
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
A face without a heart ?

*Laertes.* Why ask you this ?

*King.* Not that I think you did not love your father ;  
But that <sup>3</sup> I know love is begun by time ;  
And that I see, in passages of proof,  
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.  
There lives within the very flame of love  
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it ;  
And nothing is at a like goodness *still* ;  
For goodness, growing to a *plurisy*,  
Dies in his own too-much : that we would do,  
We *should* do when we *would* ; 'for this "*would*"  
changes,  
And hath abatements and delays as many,  
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents ;  
And then this "*should*" is like <sup>4</sup> a spendthrift sigh,

*fencers*

100 *thrust*

*jealousy of him*

*always*

*redundancy*

*of blood*

*ought to*

*(should)*

*desire (would)*

120

<sup>1</sup> The brightest ornament and most precious person in all the nation.

<sup>2</sup> Impregnate Hamlet with jealousy of his skill.

<sup>3</sup> I know that love commences at a precise moment of time, and I observe by passages of experience that it dies out in course of time.

<sup>4</sup> Our will for action is apt to abate itself and postpone performance for many reasons, and then the duty (*should*) remains neglected and undone, and we become like spendthrifts vainly sighing for the estate we have squandered.

<sup>5</sup> An unnecessary sigh that wastes the strength

That hurts by easing. But, to the *quick o' the ulcer* :  
Hamlet comes back : what would you undertake,  
To show yourself your father's son in deed  
More than in words ?

*Laertes.* To cut his throat i' the church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder *sanctuarize* ;  
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,  
' Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.  
Hamlet, returned, shall know you are come home :  
We'll *put* on *those* shall praise your excellence,  
And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you ; bring you, *in fine*, together,  
And wager on your heads : he, being *remiss*,  
' Most *generous*, and free from all contriving,  
Will not *peruse* the foils ; so that, with ease,  
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
A sword *unbated*, and, in a *pass of practice*,  
Requite him for your father.

*Laertes.* I will do't :

And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.  
I bought an *unction* of a *mountebank*,  
So *mortal*, that but dip a knife in it,  
Where it draws blood no *cataplasm* so rare,  
Collected from all *simples* that have virtue  
Under the moon, can save the thing from death  
That is but scratched withal : I'll touch my point  
With this *contagion*, that, if I *gall* him slightly,  
It may be death.

*King.* Let's further think of this :

Weigh what convenience, both of time and means,  
' May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,  
And that our *drift* look through our bad performance,  
' Twere better not *assayed* : therefore this project  
Should have a *back*, or second, that might hold,  
If this should *blast* in *proof*. Soft !—let me see :  
We'll make a solemn wager on your *cunnings* :

root of the  
matter

protect

130 instigate  
those (who)

in short

careless

noble-hearted

examine closely

unblunted, i.e.  
without a  
button

treacherous  
thrust

140 a salve  
quack  
deadly  
plaster  
medicinal  
herbs

poison  
scratch

150 intention  
appear  
attempted  
breaker  
burst  
testing  
skill

<sup>1</sup> If you are determined to do this.

<sup>2</sup> Most noble-hearted and absolutely straightforward.

<sup>3</sup> Plants that have magic virtues when gathered by moonlight.

<sup>4</sup> "Enable us to act our proposed part" (C. & W.).

I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and *dry*  
(As make your bouts more violent to that end),  
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him  
A chalice for the *nonce* ; whereon but sipping,  
If he by chance escape your venom'd *stuck*,  
Our purpose may hold there.

*thirsty*

*so*

*occasion*

160 *thrust in  
fencing*

*Enter QUEEN.*

How now, sweet queen !

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow : your sister's drowned, Laertes.

*Laertes.* Drowned ! O, where ?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows *aslant* a brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream ;  
There with fantastic garlands did she come  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and *long purples*,  
That *liberal* shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them :  
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;  
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,  
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up :  
*Which* time, she chanted snatches of old tunes ;  
As one *incapable* of her own distress,  
<sup>1</sup> Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element : but long it could not be,  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.

*leaning over*

*purple orchid  
freer spoken*

170

*during which  
unable to feel,  
3 syllables*

180

*Laertes.* Alas, then, she is drowned ?

*Queen.* Drowned, drowned.

*Laertes.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
And therefore I forbid my tears : but yet  
It is our *trick* ; nature her custom holds,  
Yet shame say what it will : <sup>2</sup> when these are gone,

*particular  
habit*

<sup>1</sup> "Connected by nature with and endowed with qualities enabling her to live in water" (C. & W.).

When I have ceased weeping I will put away this womanish way.

The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord :  
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly *douts it*.

[*Exit.*put it out,  
extinguishes

*King.* Let's follow, Gertrude.  
How much I had to do to calm his rage !  
Now fear I this will *give it start* again ;  
Therefore, let's follow.

190

set it in motion

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.—A Churchyard.

*Enter two Clowns, with spades, etc.*

*1st Clown.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial,  
that wilfully seeks her own *salvation* ?

he means des-  
truction

*2nd Clown.* I tell thee, she is ; and therefore make  
her grave *straight* : the *crowner* hath sat on her, and  
finds it Christian burial.

immediately  
coroner

*1st Clown.* How can that be, unless she drowned her-  
self in her own defence ?

*2nd Clown.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1st Clown.* It must be *se offendendo* ; it cannot be else.  
For here lies the point : if I drown myself wittingly, 10  
it argues an act : and an act hath three branches ; it is,  
to act, to do, and to perform : *argal*, she drowned herself  
wittingly.

ergo,  
consequently  
digger

*2nd Clown.* Nay, but hear you, goodman *delver*.

*1st Clown.* Give me leave. Here lies the water ;  
good : here stands the man ; good : if the man go to  
this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he  
goes ; mark you that ? but if the water come to him, and  
drown him, he drowns not himself : *argal*, he that is not  
guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 20

*2nd Clown.* But is this law ?

*1st Clown.* Ay, marry, is't ; crowner's-*quest* law.

inquest

*2nd Clown.* Will you ha' the truth on't ? If this had  
not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried  
out of Christian burial.

*1st Clown.* Why, there thou *say'st* ; and the more pity,  
that great folk should have *countenance* in this world  
to drown or hang themselves, more than their *even*

to the point  
approval  
fellow

Christian.—Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: 30 they hold up Adam's profession.

2nd Clown. Was he a gentleman?

1st Clown. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2nd Clown. Why, he had none.

1st Clown. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2nd Clown. Go to.

1st Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd Clown. The gallows-maker; for that frame out-lives a thousand tenants.

1st Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: *argal*, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2nd Clown. Who builds stronger than a mason, a 50 shipwright, or a carpenter?

1st Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd Clown. Marry, now I can tell.

1st Clown. To't.

2nd Clown. Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO at a distance.*

1st Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker": the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to *Yaughan*; fetch me a *stoop* of liquor. 60

[*Exit 2nd Clown.*]

[*He digs and sings.*]

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,

O, methought, there was nothing meet.

armorial bear-  
ings

a play on  
words

occupants

therefore

by the mass

may be a cor-  
ruption of  
*Johan*  
*tankard*

suitable

*Hamlet.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Horatio.* <sup>1</sup> Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Hamlet.* 'Tis e'en so : the hand of little employment hath the *daintier* sense.

70 *more delicate*

*1st Clown.* [*Sings.*]

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath clawed me in his clutch,

And hath shipped me *intill* the land,

*into*

As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*]

*Hamlet.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once : how the knave *jowls* it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder ! It might be the pate of a *politician*, which this ass now o'er-reaches ; one that *would* circumvent God, might it not ?

*knocks**schemer**would like to*

80

*Horatio.* It might, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Or of a courtier ; which could say, " Good-morrow, sweet lord ! How dost thou, good lord ? " This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it ; might it not ?

*Horatio.* Ay, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Why, e'en so ; and now my Lady Worm's ; *chapless*, and knocked about the *mazard* with a sexton's spade : here's *fine revolution*, an we had the *trick* to see't. Did these bones cost no more *the* breeding, but to play at loggats with them ? mine ache to think on't.

*without a jaw  
head  
wonderful  
change  
skill  
(in) the*

*1st Clown.* [*Sings.*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,

For and a shrouding sheet :

O, a pit of clay for to be made

*and also*

For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*]

*Hamlet.* There's another : why may not that be the

<sup>1</sup> Custom has made it an easy duty for him : one unhardened by habit would feel it more keenly.

skull of a lawyer? Where be his *quiddits* now, his *quilletts*, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the 100 *sconce* with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of *battery*? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the *fine* of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the *inheritor* 110 himself have no more, ha?

*Horatio.* Not a jot more, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

*Horatio.* Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

*Hamlet.* They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sir?

*1st Clown.* Mine, sir.

[*Sings.*] O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

120

*Hamlet.* I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

*1st Clown.* You lie out *on't*, sir, and therefore it is not ours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

*Hamlet.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the *quick*; therefore thou liest.

*1st Clown.* 'Tis a *quick* lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

*Hamlet.* What man dost thou dig it for?

130

*1st Clown.* For no man, sir.

*Hamlet.* What woman, then?

*1st Clown.* For none, neither.

*Hamlet.* Who is to be buried in't?

*1st Clown.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Hamlet.* How *absolute* the knave is! we must speak

*equivocations*  
*nice points*

*head*  
*for assault*

*end*

*possessor*

*of it*

*living*

*lively*

*positive*



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As if I had never been such.

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*equivocations*  
*nicie points*

*heave*  
*for assault*

*end*

*possessor*

*of it*

*living*

*lively*

*positive*

by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so *picked*, that the toe of the peasant <sup>140</sup> comes so near the heel of the courtier, he *galls* his *hike*.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*1st Clown.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

*Hamlet.* How long is that since?

*1st Clown.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Hamlet.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England? <sup>150</sup>

*1st Clown.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

*Hamlet.* Why?

*1st Clown.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

*Hamlet.* How came he mad?

*1st Clown.* Very strangely, they say.

*Hamlet.* How strangely?

*1st Clown.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits. <sup>160</sup>

*Hamlet.* Upon what ground?

*1st Clown.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Hamlet.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

*1st Clown.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

*Hamlet.* Why he more than another?

*1st Clown.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his <sup>170</sup> trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

*Hamlet.* Whose was it?

*1st Clown.* A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

*carefully  
doublemeaning*

*precise,  
particular  
rules*

*chap, or sore  
on the heel*

*For what  
cause?*

*Hamlet.* Nay, I know not.

*1st Clown.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'a poured a flagon of *Rhenish* on my head once. This same skull, sir, was *Yorick's* skull, the king's jester.

*Hamlet.* This?

*1st Clown.* E'en that.

*Hamlet.* Let me see.—[*Takes the skull.*]—Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of *infinite jest*, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my *gorge* rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your *gibes* now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? *quite chap-fallen*? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Horatio.* What's that, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Dost thou think *Alexander* looked o' this fashion *in the earth*?

*Horatio.* E'en so.

*Hamlet.* And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*]

*Horatio.* E'en so, my lord.

*Hamlet.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

*Horatio.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so

✓ *Hamlet.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with *modesty enough*, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:  
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,  
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

he  
*Rhenish wine*  
*George's*

*inexhaustible*  
*wit*

throat, i.e. I  
feel sick  
*sneers*

thoroughly  
downcast  
*appearance*

*Alexander the*  
*Great*  
*when buried*

without exag-  
geration

*gust of wind*

But soft ! but soft ! aside :—here comes the king.

*Enter Priests, etc., in procession: the corpse of  
OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following;  
KING, QUEEN, their trains, etc.*

The queen, the courtiers : who is that they follow ?

And with such *maimed* rites ? This doth betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand

*For*do its own life : 'twas of some *estate*.

Couch we a while, and mark. [*Retiring with HORATIO.*

*Laertes.* What ceremony else ?

*Hamlet.*

That is Laertes,

A very noble youth : mark.

*Laertes.* What ceremony else ?

*1st Priest.* Her *obsequies* have been as far enlarged

As we have *warrantise* : her death was doubtful ;

And, ' but that great command o'ersways the order,

She *should* in ground *unsanctified* have lodged,

Till the last trumpet ; *for* charitable prayers,

*Shards*, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her :

Yet here she is allowed her virgin *crants*,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home

Of bell and burial.

*Laertes.* Must there no more be done ?

*1st Priest.*

No more be done :

We should profane the service of the dead,

To sing a *requiem*, and such rest to her

As to *peace-parted* souls.

*Laertes.*

Lay her i' the earth ;

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,

A ministering angel shall my sister be,

When thou liest *howling*.

*Hamlet.*

What, the fair Ophelia !

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet : farewell !

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife ;

I *thought* thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,

And not have strewed thy grave.

(to the grave)  
defective

undo, destroy  
rank  
lie down and  
hide

funeral rites  
permission

ought to and  
should  
unconsecrated  
in the place of  
potsheris  
garlands

hymn of peace  
departed in  
peace

i.e. for mercy

fondly expected

' Were it not that the express command of the king overrides the decree (or  
anon) of the Church.

*Laertes.*

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursèd head,  
 Whose wicked deed thy *most ingenious sense*  
 Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,  
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

250

*intellect*[*Leaping into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the *quick* and dead,  
 Till of this *flat* a mountain you have made,  
 To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head  
 Of blue Olympus.

*living**level surface*

*Hamlet.* [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief  
 Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
 Conjures the *wandering stars*, and makes them *stand*,  
 Like *wonder-wounded* hearers? this is I,  
 Hamlet the Dane.

*i.e. manner of man**invokes**planets**i.e. still**struck with**wonder*[*Leaping into the grave.*]*Laertes.* The devil take thy soul![*Grappling with him.*]*Hamlet.* Thou pray'st not well.

260

I prythee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
 For though I am not *splenetic* and rash,  
 Yet have I something in me dangerous,  
 Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

*easily angered**King.* Pluck them asunder.*Queen.*

Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen,—*Horatio.*

Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

*Hamlet.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme  
 Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

*Queen.* O my son, what theme?*Hamlet.* I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers 270

Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
 Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.*Hamlet.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

Woo't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile?

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?

*for (the)  
 by God's  
 wounds  
 wouldst (thou)*

To outface me with leaping in her grave?  
 Be buried *quick* with her, and so will I:  
 And, if thou *prate* of mountains, let them throw  
 Millions of acres on us; <sup>1</sup> till our ground,  
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,  
 Make Ossa *like* a wart! Nay, *and* thou'lt mouth,  
 I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.*

This is *mere* madness:  
 And thus a while the fit will work on him;  
*Anon*, as patient as the female dove,  
 When that her golden couplets are *disclosed*,  
 His silence will sit drooping.

*Hamlet.*

Hear you, sir;  
 What is the reason that you use me thus?  
 I loved you ever: but it is no matter;  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit* HORATIO.]

[*To* LAERTES] Strengthen **your** patience in our last  
 night's speech;

We'll put the matter to the *present* push.—  
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument.

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;

Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.* 300]

## SCENE II.—A Hall in the Castle.

*Enter* HAMLET and HORATIO.

*Hamlet.* So much for this, sir: now shall you see the  
*other*:

You do remember all the *circumstance*?

*Horatio.* Remember it, my lord!

*Hamlet.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of *fighting*  
 That would not let me sleep: methought I lay  
 Worse than the *mutines* in the *bilboes*. *Rashly*,

browbeat  
 280 alive and  
 quickly  
 rant

no bigger than  
 if

absolute

soon  
 produced

290

in the thought  
 of  
 instant test

document  
 details

struggle  
 rebels  
 stocks  
 hastily

<sup>1</sup> Till the spot we stand on burns its top against the zodiac (*burning zone*),  
 or imaginary path of the sun.

And praised be *rashness* for it : let us know,  
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
✓ When our deep plots *do pall* : and that should teach us,  
There's a divinity that *shapes our ends*,  
Rough-hew them *how we will*.

10

*Horatio.*

That is most certain.

*Hamlet.* Up from my cabin,  
My sea-gown *scarfed about* me, in the dark  
Groped I to find out them : had my desire ;  
*Fingered* their packet ; and, in fine, withdrew  
To mine own *room* again : making so bold,  
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,—  
O royal *knavery* !—an exact command,  
*Larded* with many several sorts of reasons,  
*Importing Denmark's* health, and *England's* too,  
With, ho ! <sup>1</sup> such *bugs* and goblins in my life,  
That, on the *supervise*, no *leisure bated*,  
No, not to *stay* the grinding of the axe,  
My head should be struck off.

20

*Horatio.*

Is't possible ?

*Hamlet.* Here's the commission : read it at more  
leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed ?

*Horatio.* I beseech you.

*Hamlet.* Being thus *benetted* round with villainies,—  
<sup>2</sup> Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,  
*They* had begun the play. I sat me down ;  
Devised a new commission ; wrote it *fair* :  
I once did hold it, as our *statists* do,  
A *baseness* to write fair, and laboured much  
How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now  
It did me *yeoman's* service : wilt thou know  
The effect of what I wrote ?

30

*Horatio.*

Ay, good my lord.

*Hamlet.* An *earnest* conjuration from the king,  
As England was his faithful tributary ;  
As love between them like the palm might flourish ;

40

*haste**fast**thrown loosely  
round**put my hand  
on  
cabin**interspersed  
concerning  
king of  
bugbears  
looking over  
without delay  
wait for**ensnared**i.e. my brains  
in good hand-  
writing  
statesmen  
mark of low  
birth**right trusty  
purport**solemn appeal*

<sup>1</sup> Such bugbears and imaginary fears caused through my being alive.

<sup>2</sup> Ere I could devise a plan, my brains had commenced the work.



As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,  
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities ;  
 And many such-like *as'es of great charge*,—  
 That, on the *view* and *know* of these contents,  
 Without *debatement* further, more or less,  
 He should the bearers put to *sudden death*,  
*Not shriving-time allowed.*

*Horatio.* How was this sealed ?

*Hamlet.* Why, even in that was heaven *ordain'd*.  
 I had my father's signet in my purse,  
 Which was the *model* of that Danish seal ;  
 Folded the *writ* up in form of the other ;  
 Subscribed it ; *gave't the impression* ; placed it safely,  
 The changeling never known. Now, the next day  
 Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was *sequent*  
 Thou know'st already.

*Horatio.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go *to't*.

*Hamlet.* 'Why, man, they did make love to this  
 employment ;

They *are not near* my conscience ; ' their *defeat*  
 Does by their own *insinuation* grow :

'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes  
 Between the *pass* and *fell* incens'd points  
 Of mighty *opposites*.

*Horatio.* Why, what a king is this !

*Hamlet.* Does it not, think'st thee, *stand me now*  
*upon—*

He that hath killed my king, and wronged my mother ;  
 Popped in between the election and my hopes ;  
 Thrown out his *angle* for my *proper* life,  
 And with such *cozenage*—is't not perfect conscience,  
 To *quit* him with this arm ? and is't not to be damned  
 To let this canker of our nature come  
 In further evil ?

*weighty pro-  
 visos  
 reading  
 knowledge  
 debate  
 instant  
 without delay*

*ordainin,*

50 *counterpart  
 a document  
 signed  
 sealed  
 subsequent*

*to their death*

*do not trouble  
 destruction  
 intrusion*  
 60 *thrust  
 deadly  
 adversaries*

*Is it not  
 incumbent  
 upon me ?*

*rod and line  
 own  
 trickery  
 to settle with  
 him*

70

<sup>1</sup> They undertook this service for the king of their own free will ; it exactly accorded with their own wishes.

<sup>2</sup> Their destruction (*i.e.* of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) has been brought about by their wilful intruding into this business ; it is dangerous for any one to come between the thrust (*pass*) and sword-points of angry (*incens'd*) opponents fighting a deadly (*fell*) duel.

*Horatio.* It must be *shortly* known to him from  
England

What is the *issue* of the business there.

*Hamlet.* It will be short: the *interim* is mine;  
And a man's life's no more than to say "One."

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself;  
For, by the *image* of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his: I'll court his *favours*:  
But, sure, the *bravery* of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Horatio.* Peace! who comes here? 80

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Osric.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Hamlet.* I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?

*Horatio.* No, my good lord.

*Hamlet.* Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a  
vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let  
a beast be lord of beasts, and his *crib* shall stand at the  
king's *mess*: 'tis a *chough*; but, as I say, spacious in the  
possession of *dirt*. 90

*Osric.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I  
*should* impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Hamlet.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of  
spirit. Put your *bonnet* to his right use; 'tis for the  
head.

*Osric.* I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

*Hamlet.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is  
wrotherly.

*Osric.* It is *indifferent* cold, my lord, indeed.

*Hamlet.* But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot; 100  
or my *complexion*.—

*Osric.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as  
'twere,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty  
bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager  
on your head. Sir, this is the matter—

*Hamlet.* I beseech you, remember—

[HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.

soon

result  
intervening  
time

reflection  
good will  
dragging

manger  
table  
chattering  
jackdaw  
filth

it is my duty  
one  
cap

moderately  
constitution

*Osr.* Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an *absolute* gentleman, full of most excellent *differences*, of very *soft* society, and *great showing*: indeed, 110 to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of *gentry*; for you shall find in him the *continent* of what part a gentleman would see.

*Hamlet.* Sir, 'his *definement* suffers no *perdition* in you:—though, I know, to divide him *inventorially*, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet *but* yaw *neither*, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such *dearth* and *rareness*, as, to make true *diction* of him, his *semblable* is his mirror; 120 and who else would trace him, his *umbrage*, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Hamlet.* The *concernancy*, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our *more raver* breath?

*Osr.* Sir?

*Horatio.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

*Hamlet.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman? 130

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Horatio.* His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

*Hamlet.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know you are not ignorant—

*Hamlet.* I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, *it would not much approve me*. Well, sir.

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Hamlet.* I dare not confess that, lest I should com-140 pare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

perfect  
distinctions  
gentle  
elegance  
gentlemanli-  
ness  
embodiment  
definition  
loss  
like taking an  
inventory  
only

scarcity, dear-  
ness  
qualities  
rarely found  
description  
likeness  
shadow  
connection  
Double comp

do me much  
credit

'The description of him suffers no loss in your telling—though to make a detailed list of all his good qualities would bewilder a skilled arithmetician, who would even then come as far from a complete enumeration as a boat holding an unsteady course falls behind a fast-sailing vessel.

*Osric.* I mean, sir, for his weapon ; but in the *imputation* laid on him *by* them, in his *meed* he's *unfellowed*.

*Hamlet.* What's his weapon ?

*Osric.* Rapier and dagger.

*Hamlet.* That's two of his weapons : but, well.

*Osric.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses : against the which he has *imponed*, as I take it, six French rapiers and *poniards*, with their *assigns*, as girdle, *hangers*, and so : three of the *carriages*, in faith, are very dear to fancy, *very responsive* to the hilts, most delicate *carriages*, and of very *liberal conceit*.

*Hamlet.* What call you the *carriages* ?

*Horatio.* I knew you must be edified by the *margent*, ere you had done.

*Osric.* The *carriages*, sir, are the *hangers*.

*Hamlet.* The phrase would be more *german* to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides : I would it might be *hangers* till then. But, on : six Barbary horses against six French swords, their *assigns*, and three liberal-conceited *carriages* ; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this *imponed*, as you call it ?

*Osric.* The king, sir, hath *laid*, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits : he hath *laid* on twelve for nine ; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the *answer*.

*Hamlet.* How if I answer "no" ?

*Osric.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Hamlet.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall : if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me ; let the foils be brought, *the gentleman willing*, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can ; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

*Osric.* Shall I *redeliver* you e'en so ?

*Hamlet.* To this effect, sir : after what flourish your nature will.

repute  
by his skill in  
arms  
merit  
unrivall'd

staked  
small daggers  
appendages  
part of sword  
belt  
hangers  
well matched  
elaborate design

akin,  
appropriate

staked

wagered

wagered

170 the combat

if he be willing

shall

180 report

*Osric.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Hamlet.* Yours, yours.—[*Exit OSRIC.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else *for's* turn.

*Horatio.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

*Hamlet.* He did *comply* with his *dug*, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same <sup>190</sup> breed, that, I know, the *drossy* age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of *yesty* collection, which carries them through and through the most *fond* and *winnowed* opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

*Enter a Lord.*

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young *Osric*, who brings back to him, that you *attend* him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure *hold* to play with *Laertes*, or *that* you will take longer time.

*Hamlet.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so *able* as now.

*Lord.* The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

*Hamlet.* *In happy time.*

*Lord.* The queen desires you to use some gentle *entertainment* to *Laertes*, before you fall to play.

*Hamlet.* She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

*Horatio.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Hamlet.* I do not think so; since he went into <sup>210</sup> France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter

*Horatio.* Nay, good my lord—

*Hamlet.* It is but *foolery*; but it is such a kind of *gain-giving*, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

*Horatio.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will *forestal* their *repair* hither, and say you are not *fit*.

*Hamlet.* Not a whit; we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be <sup>220</sup> now, 'tis not to come: if it be not to come, it will be

*for his*

*adapt himself  
to  
teat, pay  
worthless*

*frothy  
foolish  
well sifted*

*await  
hold good  
if*

*fit for the  
contest  
at the right  
moment  
act courteously*

*a silly feeling  
misgiving*

*anticipate  
coming  
ready*

now ; if it be not now, yet it will come : the readiness is all : since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes ? *Let be.*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, etc.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

*Hamlet.* Give me your pardon, sir : I've done you wrong ;

But *pardon't*, as you are a gentleman.

*This presence* knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am *punished*

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and *exception*

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes ? Never Hamlet :

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not ; Hamlet denies it.

Who does it, then ? His madness : if't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged ;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my *disclaiming* from a *purposed evil*

*Free* me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow *o'er the house*,

And hurt my brother.

*Laertes.*

• I am satisfied *in nature*,

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge : but in *my terms* of honour,

I stand aloof ; and *will* no *reconciliation*,

'Till by some elder masters, of known honour,

I have a voice and precedent of peace,

To keep my *name ungor'd*. But till that time,

I do receive your offered love like love,

*no matter*

*pardon it  
these present  
here  
afflicted*

*objection*

*disavowing  
intentional  
wrong  
acquit  
at random  
personally*

*as a matter of  
will have  
reconciliation*

*honour  
unstained*

"Until I have an opinion and precedent that will justify me in making peace" (C. & W.).

And will not wrong it.

*Hamlet.* I embrace it freely ;

And will this brother's wager frankly play.

Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laertes.* Come, one for me.

*Hamlet.* I'll be your foil, *Laertes* : in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,

Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laertes.* You mock me, sir.

*Hamlet.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young *Osric*.—Cousin

*Hamlet*,

You know the wager ?

*Hamlet.* Very well, my lord ;

Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it ; I have seen you both :

But since he is bettered, we have therefore odds.

*Laertes.* This is too heavy, let me see another.

*Hamlet.* This likes me well. These foils have all a length ?

*Osric.* Ay, my good lord. [*They prepare to play.*]

*King.* Set me the *stoops* of wine upon that table :

If *Hamlet* give the first or second hit,

' Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

Let all the battlements their *ordnance* fire ;

The king shall drink to *Hamlet's* better breath ;

And in the cup an *union* shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings

In *Denmark's* crown have worn. Give me the cups ;

And let the *kettle* to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,

" Now the king drinks to *Hamlet* !"—Come, begin ;—

And you, the judges, bear a *wary* eye.

*Hamlet.* Come on, sir.

*Laertes.* Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

*Hamlet.* One.

*Laertes.* No.

*Hamlet.* Judgment. 230

take you at  
your word

260

pleases. suits  
one

tankards

270

cannon

pearl

kettledrum

watchful

\* Pay off (*Laertes*) in meeting him at the third encounter.

*Osric.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laertes.* Well ;—again.

*King.* Stay ; give me drink.—Hamlet, this pearl is thine ;

Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

*Hamlet.* I'll play this bout first ; set it by a while.

Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit ; what say you ?

*Laertes.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my *napkin*, rub thy brows :

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Hamlet.* Good madam !

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink. 290

*Queen.* I will, my lord ; I pray you, pardon me.

*King.* [*Aside*] It is the poisoned cup ; it is too late.

*Hamlet.* I dare not drink yet, madam ; by and by.

*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face.

*Laertes.* My lord, I'll hit him now.

*King.* I do not think it.

*Laertes.* [*Aside*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

*Hamlet.* Come, for the third, Laertes : you but dally ;

I pray you, pass with your best violence ;

I am afeared you make a wanton of me.

*Laertes.* Say you so ? come on. [*They play.* 300

*Osric.* Nothing, neither way.

*Laertes.* Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET ; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*]

*King.* Part them ; they are incensed.

*Hamlet.* Nay, come, again. [*The QUEEN falls.*]

*Osric.* Look to the queen there, ho !

*Horatio.* They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord ?

*Osric.* How is it, Laertes ?

*Laertes.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,

*Osric ;*

*evitent*

*handkerchief  
drinks good  
luck to*

*trifle*

*sport or*

*stave*



I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

*Hamlet.* How does the queen ?

*King.* She swoons to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet !—

The drink, the drink ;—I am poisoned. [*Dies.* 310]

*Hamlet.* O villainy !—Ho ! let the door be locked :

Treachery ! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

*Laertes.* It is here, Hamlet : Hamlet, thou art slain ;

No medicine in the world can do thee good ;

In thee there is not half an hour of life ;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

*Unbated*, and *envenomed* : the foul practice

Hath turned itself on me ; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again : thy mother's poisoned :

I can no more :—the king, the king's to blame.

*Hamlet.* The point *envenomed* too !—

Then, venom, do thy work. [*Stabs the KING.*

*All.* Treason ! treason !

*King.* O, yet defend me, friends : I am but hurt.

*Hamlet.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned

Dane,

Drink off this potion :—is thy union here ?

Follow my mother. [*KING dies.*

*Laertes.* He is justly served ;

It is a poison *tempered* by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee ; 330

Nor thine on me !

*Hamlet.* Heaven make thee *free* of it ! I follow thee. [*Dies.*

I am dead, *Horatio*. Wretched queen, adieu !

You that look pale and tremble at this *chance*,

That are but *mutes* or audience to this act,

Had I but time, (as this *fell sergeant*, Death,

Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you—

But let it be.—*Horatio*, I am dead ;

Thou liv'st ; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

*Horatio.* Never believe it :

I am more an *antique* Roman than a Dane ;

unblunted  
poisoned

compounded

i.e. from the  
guilt

event

cruel  
sheriff's officer

ancient

Here's yet some liquor left.

*Hamlet.*

As thou'rt -- man,

Give me the cup : let go ; by heaven I'll have it.  
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me !  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity a while,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story. [March afar off, and shot within.

What warlike noise is this ?

*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from  
Poland,

350

To the ambassadors of England *gives*  
*This warlike volley.*

*Hamlet.*

O, I die, Horatio ;

The potent poison quite *o'er-crows* my spirit :  
I cannot live to hear the news from England ;

But I do prophesy the election 'lights

On Fortinbras : he has my dying voice :

' So tell him, with the *occurrents*, more and less,

Which have *solicited*.—The rest is silence.

[Dies.

*Horatio.* Now cracks a noble heart :—good night,  
sweet prince ;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest ! [March within. 360  
Why does the drum come hither ?

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and others.*

*Fortinbras.* Where is this sight ?

*Horatio.*

What is it ye would see ?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*Fortinbras.* ' This quarry cries on havoc. O proud

Death,

What feast is *toward* in thine eternal cell,

That thou so many princes *at a shot*

So bloodily hast struck ?

*1st Ambassador.*

The sight is dismal ;

And our affairs from England come too late :

*forego for a  
time the joys  
of heaven*

*fires this  
salute*

*triumphs over*

*alights  
vote, support  
events  
roused (me)*

*imminent  
with one shot*

\* Tell him that, and also inform him of all the events greater and smaller which have called for this deed of mine.

\* This heap of dead bodies cries out against this wanton slaughter.

The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,  
To tell him his commandment is fulfilled,  
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead :  
Where should we have our thanks ?

370

*Horatio.* Not from *his* mouth,  
Had it the ability of life to thank you :

*the king's*

He never gave commandment for their death.  
But since, so *jump* upon this bloody question,  
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,  
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies

*just*

High on a *stage* be placèd to the view ;  
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,  
How these things came about : so shall you hear

*raised plat-  
form*

380

Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts ;  
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;  
Of deaths *put on* by cunning, and forced cause ;  
And, in this *upshot*, purposes mistook  
Fall'n on the *inventors'* heads : all this can I  
Truly deliver.

*brought about  
final issue  
contrivers  
narrate*

*Fortinbras.* Let us haste to hear it,  
And call the noblest to the audience.  
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune :  
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,  
Which now to claim my *vantage* doth invite me.

390

*position of ad-  
vantage*

*Horatio.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,  
And from *his* mouth whose voice will *draw on more* :  
But let this same be *presently* performed,  
Even while men's minds are wild : lest more mischance  
On plots and errors happen.

*Hamlet's  
influence more  
people  
immediately*

*Fortinbras.* Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;  
For he was likely, had he been *put on*,  
To have proved most royally : and, for his passage,  
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war,  
*Speak* loudly for him.

*proved*

400

*(let them)  
speak*

Take up the bodies : such a sight as this  
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.  
To bid the soldiers *shoot*.

*discharge a vol-  
ley in honour  
of the dead*

[*A d d ad march. Exeunt, bearing away the dead  
bodies ; after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*]

## ADDITIONAL NOTES.

### ACT I.—SCENE I.

2. **Unfold yourself** = declare who you are.
3. **Long live the king.** The pass-word for the night.
4. **Carefully upon your hour.** May mean (1) punctually, just as the clock is striking, or (2) immediately after it has struck.
13. **Rivals** = partners. Rivals (Lat. *rivus*, a stream) originally meant those dwelling near the same river, i.e. neighbours, close companions. The modern sense arose out of contentions which occurred with respect to water rights.
15. **This ground** = this country, i.e. Denmark.  
**Liegemen to the Dane** = loyal subjects to the king of Denmark.
16. **Give you good night.** Either (1) God give you, or (2) I give you.
19. **A piece of him** = something like him.
23. **Fantasy** = imagination, i.e. the appearance of the ghost was a piece of their imagination.
29. **Approve our eyes** = confirm what we have reported as to what we saw.
33. **What.** This word depends upon some verb of speech implied in either (1) "assail your ears," or "story," i.e. = either, "let us assail your ears (telling you) what we have seen," or "our story (relating) what we have seen."
36. **Yond same star.** *Yond* is demonstrative pronoun. *Star* = the Great Bear, which pivots, as it were, round the pole-star.
42. **Scholar.** And so having a knowledge of Latin, and thus able to exorcise the Ghost by adjuration. "Conjuro te."
44. **Harrow** = tortures, by rending my heart, as a harrow tears up the ground.
45. **It would be spoke (spoken) to.** There was a superstitious idea that a ghost must be spoken to first.  
**Usurp't** = to take possession of and use without any right. The usurpation is twofold (1) of the time of midnight, (2) of the form and person of the king.
48. **Buried Denmark** = the late king of Denmark, Hamlet's father, now dead and buried.
57. **Sensible.** Not active but passive meaning = what is apparent to the senses.
63. **Sledded Polack** = Polander using a sledge. Polack = the king of Poland. Compare the meeting of Napoleon and Alexander of Russia, who arranged the treaty of Tilsit on a raft moored in the river Niemen.

68. **The gross and scope of my opinion** = I cannot say exactly, but to speak generally my opinion is.
75. **Impress** = impressment to forced labour.
85. **This side of the known world** = the eastern hemisphere.  
**So** = as valiant (see l. 84).
87. **Law and heraldry.** Law = civil law. Heraldry = the formalities of chivalry.
88. **With his life, i.e.** if he fell in the combat.
90. **Moiety competent.** Moiety = half, but here evidently means a portion = an equivalent portion of territory.
94. **Carriage of the article designed.** Carriage = intent. Article = clause in the agreement, i.e. the meaning or intent of the agreement drawn up between them.
96. **Unimproved** = untried, not taught by experience.
98. **Shark'd up a list of landless resolute.** Shark'd up = gathered together indiscriminately and illegally. Resolute = desperadoes.
99. **For food and diet, i.e.** no pay given; they enlisted for the keep alone.
100. **Hath a stomach in't** = affords an opportunity for the display of courage.
101. **Our state** = the rulers of the state.
107. **Romage, lit.** roomage or stowage, as of the cargo in a ship's hold; hence, the hurry and bustle of loading a ship.
109. **Well may it sort.**  
**Sort** = agree.  
Bernardo and Horatio ascribe the appearance of the ghost as indicating his concern in the impending war. They have no suspicion that he had been murdered. Thus we learn by implication that the murder had been kept secret.
112. **Mote** = a small thing, i.e. the appearance of the Ghost, but a portent of great troubles.
114. **Mightiest Julius** = Julius Cæsar (see C. A. p. 169).
118. **Disasters in the sun.** Disaster (L. *dis*, in a bad sense; *astron*, a star) was originally an astronomical term meaning "evil stars." Here it would seem to mean sun-spots, which astronomers connect with adverse meteorological effects.  
**Moist star** = the moon. The allusion is to the attraction of the moon in causing tides.
120. **Doomsday** = the day of judgment.
122. **Harbingers** (F. *auberge*, an inn) = persons sent forward in advance to secure accommodation at an inn.  
Hence = forerunners.
125. **Climatures** = persons residing in a particular climate.
127. **I'll cross it** = cross the ghost in his course. It was popularly supposed that misfortune would befall any one crossing the path of a ghost.
136. **Upboarded—Extorted** = If you have amassed treasure by extortion and concealed it during your life. The popular superstition was that, if a man had thus wrongfully obtained wealth, his spirit could have no rest till it had revealed the place of concealment of the ill-gotten treasure.

140. **Partisan.** A long handled weapon with axe at the head.
154. **Extravagant and erring** = "Wandering abroad and straying," in the original meaning of the Latin "*extravagare*" and "*errare*."
162. **Planets strike.** Planets were supposed to influence human life. Especially were they supposed to injure at night if in an inauspicious conjunction.
166. **Russet** (Lat. *russus*, reddish) = reddish, rosy. It has been pointed out that the first streak of dawn is grey, not red.

SCENE II.

4. **Brow of woe** = woeful brow.
18. **A weak supposal of our worth** = forming the estimate that our power is weak.
21. **Colleagued, etc.** Fortinbras has two thoughts in his mind; (1) the weakness of the kingdom of Denmark (2) the hope of gaining advantage. The two thoughts combined (colleagued) lead him to make his demands upon the King.
29. **Bed-rid.** Lit. a "bed-rider," i.e. one who is carried or rides on a bed. Confined to his bed, disabled from taking active part in war.
32. **Proportions** = the different parts of the army i.e. horsemen, infantry, etc., being supplied in due proportion.
33. **Subject.** Collective = his subjects.
39. **Commend your duty** = give evidence of your readiness to perform your duty.
44. **Speak of reason** = make a reasonable request.
47. **Native to** = closely connected by nature. The context

- shows that Claudius had had the support of Polonius in his election as king.
53. **Coronation.** Both Hamlet and Laertes had come to Elsinore. Hamlet from Wittenberg for the funeral of his father. Laertes from Paris to join in the coronation festivities. Laertes now desires to return to Paris. Hamlet would return to study (see l. 113).
62. **Take thy fair hour** = make the best use of your opportunities (Lat. *carpe diem*). Enjoy yourself in your youth.
63. **Best graces, etc.** = May your accomplishments and gracious manners assist you to pass the time in Paris as you please.
64. **Cousin.** Hamlet was his stepson. But Shakespeare uses "cousin" to express any relationship.
65. **Kin** = of the same race. Kind = of the same nature (see p. 174). A play on words.
67. **Too much i' the sun** = the sunshine of the King's presence. The play on words is continued (see p. 174).
68. **Nighted colour** = dark as night. Hamlet is wearing black in mourning for his father. The rest of the court were in gay dresses for the coronation.
70. **Vailed lids** = downcast eyelids. To vail = to lower (see Glossary).
- 74-75. **Common** (74) contrasted with particular (75)
77. **Inky cloak** = black like ink.
78. **Customary suits.** May mean (1) black suits usually worn as a sign of mourning, or (2) the suits Hamlet was accustomed to wear.

93. **Obsequious sorrow** = dutiful sorrow, as from a son mourning a father, and also sorrow befitting funeral ceremonies.
95. **Incorrect** = uneducated. Participle (see p. 165).
99. **Any the most, etc.** = anything the most commonly perceived.
109. **The most immediate** = the next heir to the throne. The remark is intended to conciliate Hamlet, and to reconcile him to his present non-election to the throne.
113. **Wittenberg.** The University was not founded till 1502, so the mention of it is an anachronism. It was famous in Shakespeare's day in connection with Martin Luther. It was a favourite University with the Danes.
114. **Retrograde to our desire** = going back or contrary to our wish. Originally an astronomical term used of the apparent backward motion of planets in the heavens.
115. **Bend you** = Change your mind and decide upon staying. We speak of following our "bent" or "inclination."
118. **Loose her prayers** = entreat you in vain.
124. **In grace whereof** = as an honour in return for Hamlet's acquiescence.
125. **Denmark drinks.** Johnson remarks on the tendency of the King to feast and drink whenever occasion presents itself.
126. **Cannon.** An anachronism (see p. x.).
127. **Rouse** = deep draught (see Glossary).
132. **Canon** = a religious law. **Self-slaughter.** The first reference to Hamlet's idea of suicide (see III. i. 56).
134. **Uses** = the ordinary, customary habits of life.
150. **Discourse of reason, i.e.** a beast lacks intellect and is thus without the power to reason.
155. **The flushing** = transient redness, ere her tears had left (i.e. had had time) the redness in her eyes (Schmidt). This rendering makes "flushing" to be a noun.  
The Cambridge editors take "flush" as transitive = had ceased to fill her eyes with water.  
If flush is gerundial, we may render "had ceased the reddening of her eyes."
159. **Hold my tongue.** Mark Hamlet's reticence in public on his mother's shame.
163. **Change** = exchange. Hamlet will change places with Horatio. He will be Horatio's "servant," Horatio shall be his "friend."
180. **Thrift** = a thrifty arrangement. Spoken in sarcasm.
182. **Dearest foe** = my most bitter enemy. "Dear" is used by Shakespeare as having an intensive force.
200. **Cap-à-pé** = from head to foot.
204. **Truncheon** = staff of command.
230. **Beaver**, the lower front part of the helmet, which could be lifted up and thus expose the lower part of the face (see p. 183).
242. **Sable-silvered** = dark hair tinged with grey.
247. **Tenable in your silence** = regarded as still to be kept secret.

## SCENE III.

- 2-4. Let me hear from you whenever the wind is favourable, and you have the means of conveying a letter by a vessel sailing to France.
6. **Fashion.** Changeable, and temporary as a fashion in dress. **Toy in blood** = the passing fancy of youth, not a deep affection.
7. **Primy nature** = nature in the time of spring.
10. **No more but so?** = nothing more than that.
16. **The virtue of his will** = his honest intention in love.
22. **Choice.** Hamlet, as a prince, is not free to choose his wife. His choice must be approved of by the state.
83. **Hoops of Steel** = binding them to itself by an encircling band as strong as steel.
64. **Dull thy palm.** Dull = make dull, i.e. soil = do not make yourself too common in being friendly with everyone.
71. **Not expressed in fancy** = not marked by eccentricity in style.
76. There is a double loss—  
(1) of the money lent;  
(2) of the friend to whom it is lent.
86. **Shall keep the key, etc.** = I will remember your advice and follow it till you release me from obedience.
90. **Marry** = an oath = By (the Virgin) Mary.
107. **Sterling**, true, pure; used of gold, i.e. pure gold. The word is an abbreviation of *Esterling*, a name for the Eastern merchants, who dealt in pure money, i.e. money of pure gold and of exact weight. Polonius suggests that Hamlet's vows

- are not to be regarded as of true metal—they are unreliable. **Tender yourself more dearly** = regard or value yourself more highly.
108. **Crack the wind** = to overstrain, e.g. to break a horse's wind by overdriving.
113. **Given countenance** = has strengthened his declaration of love by vows of constancy.
115. **Woodcocks**, foolish birds, easily caught. The phrase is proverbial for taking in a simple fellow.
125. **Larger tether** = a longer rope giving an animal more space for movement. Tether is the rope by which the animal is tied to a stake and yet leaving him liberty of movement to graze. Hamlet, as if tethered with a longer rope, has more liberty of action than Ophelia.
127. **Brokers** = go-betweens, negotiators.
133. **Slander** = disgrace.

## SCENE IV.

9. **Up-spring.** According to Elze, the word corresponds to the German "*Hupfauß*," and was "the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-makings."
12. **Triumph**, sarcastic, representing the drinking of a pledge as some victorious event.
19. **Swinish phrase** = some allusion to us as being no better than swine.
20. **Soil our addition** = sully our title by thus comparing us to swine.
22. **The pith and marrow of our attribute.** "The best and most valuable part of the praise that otherwise would be attributed to us." JOHNSON.



32. **Nature's livery** = a natural defect, bestowed by nature at birth.  
**Fortune's star** = an accidental defect through the influence of circumstances. A person's life or fortune was supposed to be influenced by the stars.
35. **General censure** = public opinion.
36. **The dram of base.** Dram = small quantity. Base = evil. A slight admixture of evil.
40. **Spirit of health** = a saved spirit, i.e. a good spirit.
43. **Questionable shape.** Various rendered (1) in a form inviting question, (2) capable of being questioned, (3) arousing questions in Hamlet's mind.
47. **Canonized** = buried according to the service prescribed by the canons of the Church.
49. **In-urned** = entombed. Urn here = grave.
53. **Glimpses** = seen at intervals, i.e. the moonbeams struggling to appear from behind the clouds.
54. **We fools of nature.** "We" should be "us," objective after "making" = making us the sport of nature.
73. **Deprive your sovereignty of reason** = take away the control of reason, the ruling principle of the mind, i.e. deprive you of the faculty of reason.
- 
- SCENE V.
2. **My hour,** i.e. cock-crow, when ghosts must return to the lower regions.
10. **To walk the night** = to pass the night in wandering on earth.
11. **To fast,** etc. One of the supposed punishments of hell.
12. **Days of nature** = the period of my natural life.
13. **Burnt and purg'd away.** An allusion to the doctrine of purgatory.
16. **Harrow** = to tear up in agony.
20. **Fretful porcupine.** An animal which, when irritated, shoots out its quills erect.
21. **Eternal blazon** = a revelation concerning the spirit world. Blazon = the blowing of a trumpet (see Glossary).
37. **Process** = the full account of. "Perhaps here the sense of an official narrative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French *procès verbal*" (O. P.).
46. **Hebenon,** oil made from henbane, which, according to Pliny, if dropped into the ear affects the brain.
81. **Distracted globe** may mean (1) "the troubled world" or (2) "a bewildered brain." In acting the play Hamlet puts his hand upon his head.
82. **Table** = writing tablet of slate or ivory.
99. **Hillo,** etc. Hamlet, desiring his friends to approach, calls to them in terms which falconers use to a hawk in the air, when they would have him come down to them.
132. **Upon my sword.** The hilt of the sword formed a cross, so that the oath was taken upon the cross. It was usual to use a sword in this fashion.
133. **True-penny.** "A familiar phrase for an honest fellow." According to Collier it was "a mining term indicating where true ore was to be found."

149. **As stranger give it welcome** = Treat it as you would a stranger, and politely comply with its request.
156. **Antic**. May mean either (1) strange, fantastic or (2) disguised, with reference to a person wearing a grotesque mask in a masque.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

8. **Keep** = lodge, live.
26. **You may go so far** = you may charge him with such pursuits, but do not make him out as any worse than these.
29. **Another scandal** = a different and more scandalous vice.
34. **Unreclaimed** = untamed, a term in falconry. *Reclaim* = to call back the falcon.
38. **A fetch of warrant** = a device warranted to succeed in its object; or it may mean a device for which you have warrant or approval. Quartos read "fetch of wit" = a cunning device.
45. **In this consequence** = with a reply somewhat as follows.
62. **We of wisdom and of reach** = we persons of wisdom and foresight, i.e. we wise, far-seeing persons. •
63. **Assays of bias** = indirect attempts. A metaphor from the game at bowls. The balls are weighted on one side so as to run not in a direct course but in a curve, and the tendency to deviate from the straight line is called *bias*. In the game the player does not aim directly at the Jack, but so that the ball may travel in a curve, the bias acting and bringing the

ball round to the Jack. By this means the player is able to direct the ball so as to pass round any ball lying in the direct path. What we now call the Jack was called the "mistress" in Shakespeare's time.

69. **Observe his inclination in yourself**. This line has been variously interpreted:—

- (1) Your own inclinations will enable you to judge what his bent is likely to be.
  - (2) Shape your course according to his inclinations.
  - (3) Observe for yourself, do not trust to the reports of others.
71. **Ply his music** = let him take his own course freely without interference.
78. **Down-gyved** = hanging down over his ankles like gyves or fetters.
88. **Falls to** = sets to eagerly, i.e. as a hungry man to food.
113. **To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions** = to be over suspicious, over cautious. This is the failing of age. The young "lack discretion" (l. 116), i.e. are not sufficiently cautious.

## SCENE II.

5. **Transformation** = complete change in manner and appearance.
32. **To be commanded** = ready to carry out any commission you (the King) may give us.
52. **Fruit** = dessert. As the dessert follows the dinner, so the message of the Ambassadors from Norway will be followed by the news that Polonius has to tell the King about Hamlet.

56. **The main** = the principal cause.
57. **Our o'er-hasty marriage.** The queen shrewdly divines the real cause of Hamlet's behaviour.
58. **Sift** = examine thoroughly, and learn the truth.
61. **Upon our first** = at our first interview with him, when we made your wishes known to him.
67. **Falsely borne in hand** = trifled with and deceived. Fortinbras had taken advantage of the feebleness of the King of Norway through sickness and old age.
78. **This enterprise** = the body of troops engaged in the expedition.
79. **Regards of safety and allowance** = guarantees for the security of the country and conditions on which the troops shall be allowed to pass through Denmark.
81. **More considered** = when we have had full time for further consideration.
113. **Bosom.** Ladies had a pocket in the front of their dress in which they carried love-letters or any thing they prized.
120. **Ill at these numbers** = unskilled in writing verses.
137. **If I had played the desk or table-book.**  
Table-book = writing tablet. A sentence variously interpreted :—  
(1) If I had acted as the agent of their correspondence.  
(2) If I had minutely recorded their correspondence.  
(3) If I had been like a desk or memorandum book, of no intelligence, and simply receiving impressions, and not communicating them to others.
163. **Loose** = let loose, as one lets a dog loose.
164. **Arras** = tapestry, so called from Arras, a town in France, where there was a famous manufactory. The tapestry hung some distance from the walls so that Polonius could readily conceal himself behind it.
175. **Fishmonger** = one sent to fish out any secret.
221. **These tedious old fools.** An expression of Hamlet's relief at finding himself free from the presence of Polonius. He is his natural self for a moment, but resumes his assumed manner on the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
249. **Thinking makes it so.**  
Compare—  
"Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for a hermitage."  
LOVELACE.
297. **Moult no feather** = suffer no loss of honour, lose none of their dignity. Allusion may be "to dislodgment of feathers from the helmets of knights at tilting matches."—HUNTER.
304. **Congregation of vapours** = collection of mist clouds hiding the face of the sun.
310. **Quintessence** = the fifth essence (Lat. *quintus*, the fifth). The ancients recognized four elements—earth, air, fire and water; after these had been extracted from any substance, they supposed there remained the pure essence—the fifth.

326. **Tickled o' the sere.** This phrase describes persons easily moved to laughter; ready to laugh at any joke. The metaphor is taken from the lock of a gun, the *sere* being the catch which prevents the hammer falling, and which is released by the pulling of the trigger.

327. **The blank verse shall halt.** May mean (1) the lady shall have full liberty to express herself even if she break the metre, (2) Elze suggests that it refers to the omission of oaths, forbidden by statute, which would spoil the metre.

333. **Inhibition.** An allusion to an occurrence which had taken place in England. Several companies of actors in Shakespeare's time had been deprived of their licence to act in an established theatre. The passage is often referred to in assigning the date of the Play.

340. **Aiery of children.** Aiery = brood. A reference to the young singing lads of the Chapel Royal of St. Paul's, who performed plays to the detriment of the regular actors.

341. **Little eyases** = nestlings or unfledged birds.

**Cry out on the top of question** = shout out at the top of their voices. Some editors regard the passage as indicating a declamation on the burning question of the day—the one that was on the top, i.e. the most prominent subject of the day. It is better, however, to regard it as descriptive of the acting; the children are like young nestlings—creatures just out of the egg, who cry or declaim in that high tone of voice usual in children.

355. **Tarre them on to controversy** = urge them on to quarrel, as one sets dogs on to fight.

367. **Hercules and his load, too.** Probably an allusion to the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare's Theatre, the sign of which was Hercules carrying the Globe. Shakespeare infers that the boys carried away much of the patronage of this theatre.

380. **Handsaw,** a corruption of "heronshaw" = a heron. In Norfolk we find "herisa." A bird when disturbed generally flies before the wind. The wind being southerly, the heron would fly to the north; the watcher would not be dazzled by the sun, and could easily distinguish between the two birds, the hawk and the heron (C. & W.).

394. **Euz, buz!** Nonsense, nonsense. An interruption intended as discourteous to Polonius. "*Buz*," says Blackstone, "used to be an interjection at Oxford when anyone began a story which was generally known there." If so, we may take it as equivalent to saying "stale news."

396. **Then came each actor,** etc. Probably a line from some old ballad (see l. 409).

398. **Tragedy, comedy, etc.** Shakespeare is here satisfying the numerous sub-divisions of the drama in his day. A licence granted to the Globe Company, 1603, gives them permission "freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage plays, and such other like."

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400. **Scene indivisible** = a play that observed the unities of place.
400. **Poem unlimited** = a play in which the unity of place was not observed.
403. "**O Jephthah, etc.**" Hamlet is quoting snatches from an old ballad, which is found in Percy's *Reliques*.
413. **Pious chanson**. A kind of Christmas carol, containing some scripture story, in loose rhymes, and sung in the streets.
423. **Valanced** = fringed with a beard. The Valance (from Valence, near Lyons, famous for its silk manufactories) is the fringe or drapery round the tester of a bed.
424. **Young lady**. Women's parts were played by boys.
427. **Chopine** (Italian *cioppino*). A high shoe worn by Venetian ladies to give them the appearance of being tall. The boy actors wore these to add to their height.
428. **Cracked within the ring**. "There was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency. Such pieces were hoarded by the usurers of the time and lent out as lawful money." (Douce Illustrations of Shakespeare).
429. **French falconers** = poor sportsmen. The French falconers were not particular what birds they caught, game or not game.
437. **Caviare to the general**. Caviare is a preparation from the roe of the sturgeon, and comes from Russia. It is considered a great luxury to those whose tastes are cultivated to it, but

not palatable to others. The meaning is that the play was a great treat to educated people, but thrown away upon the ordinary public.

The general = the public generally.

438. **Cried in the top of mine** = whose judgments had more authority than mine.
439. **Well digested in the scenes**. The scenes were well arranged so that the audience could readily follow the plot of the play.
457. **Total gules** = all bloody. Gules, a term in heraldry = red. **Tricked**, a term in heraldry = a description by drawing.
459. **Parching streets**. The heat from the burning houses had dried the blood upon Pyrrhus, so that he was caked all over as with a kind of paste.
462. **O'er-sized with coagulate gore**.  
Size is a kind of glue.  
Coagulate blood = the blood dried on his body by the heat of the blazing houses.  
Pyrrhus appears as if smeared over with dried blood.
480. **Painted tyrant**. Like a tyrant in a picture. His sword is drawn, but does not descend.
481. **Neutral** = indifferent, choosing neither one side nor the other. His will is the one side; the matter or action, i.e. the sword stroke, the other.
495. **Fellies** = Felloes. The pieces of wood composing the rim into which the spokes are inserted, and the whole bound together by the tire.
502. **Mobled** = muffled up. Moble is diminutive of "mob." We still have the word descriptive of the Mob-cap, or

large caps worn by old women. It describes Hecuba as roused by the alarm of fire, and wrapping herself up in the first garments that come to hand.

506. **Bisson** = blind.  
Rheum, anything that flows.  
Bisson rheum = blinding tears.

529. **God's bodykins**. An oath = by God's body.

570. **John-a-dreams** = John the dreamer, *i.e.* a sleepy, dreamy fellow. (*c.f.* Jack-a-Lantern). The name occurs in Armin's *Nest of Ninnies* 1608. "His name is John, indeed, says the cynic; but neither John-a-nods, nor John-a-dreams, but either as you take it."

580. **Pigeon-livered** = timid as a pigeon. The liver was supposed to be the seat of courage and passion.

**Lack gall**. Gall = courage.

588. **This slave's offal**. Offal = refuse. This slave = the king, Hamlet's uncle. Hamlet is reproaching himself for his lack of courage in not having slain the usurper, and not having given his dead body as food for the birds of prey (region kites).

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.

43. **Gracious**. Polonius is now addressing the king.
48. **Sugar o'er**. Like a pill coated with sugar to make it pleasant to the palate, and to disguise its true taste.
62. **Rub**. Taken from the game of bowls. Any impediment or obstacle in the course of the bowl is termed a "rub."

72. **Quietus**. A legal term denoting the acquittance given by the sheriff as the official discharge of an account.

78. **Bare bodkin**. A bodkin is an old term for a small dagger. Bare = unsheathed.

84. **Pith** = pitch, *i.e.* the highest point of a falcon's flight.

111. **Paradox** = an assertion contrary to general experience.

142. **Amble** = to walk with mincing, effeminate step.

143. **Nick-name**. Literally, "an additional name." *An eke-name*, *i.e.* a name given to eke out another name.

154. **Music vows**. Vows sweet as music to Ophelia's ears.

157. **Blown youth**. Full blown — Hamlet was in his prime — thirty years of age.

151. **Glass of fashion** = the mirror in which was reflected all that was in the best taste.

**Mould of form** = the model upon which all others should form themselves.

168. **Tribute**. Probably, an allusion to the Danegelt, a tax originally levied to provide the money to buy off the Danish invaders in Saxon times. It was first levied in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, A.D. 994.

164. **Disclose** = the revelation. Brood, hatch, disclose, all refer to the hen hatching her chickens.

Disclose is the technical term for the moment when the young bird just peeps through the shell, and discloses itself.

170. **Variable objects**. Variable = various. The king is suggesting that a change of scene will be the best cure for Hamlet's indisposition.

## ACT III.

## SCENE II.

- 9. Periwig-pated.** Periwig (Fr. *perruque*) = a wig. It was the custom for actors to wear wigs, though wigs did not come into general use till the reign of Charles II.
- 13. Termagant,** supposed to be a Saracen god. Represented in the mystery plays as a violent, boisterous personage (see p. 175).  
**Herod.** Another character in the mystery plays. The personification of a tyrant. It was played with great noise and rant (see p. 175).
- 33. Journeymen** = men working and paid by the day.
- 38. Speak no more,** etc. It was the custom of the clown to improvise jokes (the modern "gag" in a play). Shakespeare is probably hitting at Tarleton, an actor of his day, who was notorious for his power of "gagging."
- 59. Candied tongue.** Candied = coated over. The hypocrite's tongue coated with flattery.
- 63. Blood and judgment.** "According to the doctrine of the four humours, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judgment in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character" (JOHNSON).
- 75. One scena.** The lines that Hamlet had written for the actors (see II. ii. 541).
- 78. The very comment of thy soul** = observe the king closely with all your powers of observation.
- 80. Unkennel** = is not brought to light—i.e. as a dog is brought out of his kennel into the open.
- 83. Stithy** = the forge or smithy of a blacksmith (see Gloss.).
- 92. The chameleon's dish.** The chameleon was popularly supposed to feed on air. "Though the chameleon, Love, can feed on the air" (Two Gent. II. i. 178).
- 93. Promise-crammed** = stuffed with promises. Claudius had promised Hamlet that he should be "his son" (I. ii. 64), i.e. his heir to the throne.
- 98. University.** An allusion to the practice of performing plays in the college halls.
- 103. I' the Capitol.** Caesar was not assassinated in the Capitol, but in the Curia Pompeii, at the foot of Pompey's statue. Shakespeare in all these plays (Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra), alluding to Caesar's death, places the scene of his murder in the Capitol.
- 115. Jig-maker** = a composer or player of jigs.  
Jig was a ludicrous ballad, or a merry dance accompanying it.
- 121. Suit of sables.** Hamlet intends to say that he will cast aside his suit of mourning and will wear magnificent garments trimmed with fur, and be dressed as the rest of the court.
- 126. Hobby-horse,** a character in the May-games and Morris-dances. It was represented by a man with the figure of a horse fastened round his waist, the man's legs being concealed by a long foot-cloth. There appears to have been a popular ballad in which was this line, "For O, for O, the hobby-horse is forgot." It is again quoted in *Love's Labour's Lost* III. i. 30. The ballad is supposed to be a satire on the Puritan objection to May-games.

129. **Miching Mallecho.**  
Miching = skulking about for some sinister purpose.  
Mallecho = mischief.

Miching Mallecho = Mischief or the spirit of mischief on the watch for an opportunity to do some one harm.

139. **Posy of a ring.** A motto in verse inscribed inside a ring.

143. **Tellus' orb'd ground** = the earth (see p. 175).

143. **Borrowed sheen** = the light of the moon. The moon shines by the reflected light of the sun.

157. **And as my love is sized, etc.** My fear is in exact proportion to the size or quantity of my love.

206. **Anchor's cheer** = the fare of a hermit. Anchor (shortened form of "anchorite") = hermit.

224. **Mouse-trap.** Hamlet names the Play thus, because it was intended to entrap the guilty conscience of the King.

229. **Let the galled jade, etc.** A proverbial expression.

Jade = a poor, sorry nag.

The proverb is found in *Damon and Pythias* (1592). "I know the galled horse will soonest wince."

Withers = that part of the horse between the shoulders which takes the strain of the collar, or supports the saddle.

Galled = rubbed into a sore. A horse with a sore on the withers would draw back on feeling the pressure of the collar, or the weight in the saddle.

Unwring = without a sore.

Let those whose conscience is

seared with sin shrink at this Play of a murder, We who are innocent, need feel no compunctions.

232. **Chorus.** A character, as in the old Greek Plays, whose part it was to explain the action of a Play. Shakespeare introduces a chorus in *Henry V.*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and the *Winter's Tale*.

234. **Puppets** (Fr. *poupée*, a doll) = marionettes. The allusion is to puppet shows, common in Shakespeare's day. These were explained to the spectators by an interpreter, who sat upon the stage for that purpose. Hamlet cynically likens Ophelia and her lover to marionettes or dolls.

240. **Confederate season.** Season = time or opportunity. The opportunity for the ill-deed is represented as aiding or assisting the murderer, and so becoming his accomplice.

246. **Extant** = in existence, and so a true story.

255. **Why, let the stricken deer go weep.** The deer is said to retire from the herd when badly wounded, and go apart to weep and die. Cf. *As You Like It*, II. i. 33. So the King flees to hide his guilty face.

256. **The ungalled halt** = the uninjured deer. This represents Hamlet, who, innocent of crime, remains to enjoy the rest of the Play.

259. **This** = this Play of mine.

259. **Forest of feathers.** An allusion to the actors of Shakespeare's time, who wore gaudy dresses and sported plumes of feathers in their caps.



260. **Turn Turk**, i.e. change from Christian to infidel = to become a renegade or traitor. A common phrase of the period equivalent to the modern "go to the bad."
261. **Provincial roses** = rosettes of ribbons worn on the shoes. The name is from either Provence or Provins, the latter about forty miles from Paris.
261. **Razed shoes**. Shoes cut or slashed to a distinctive pattern.
262. **A fellowship in a cry of players** = a partnership in a company of actors.  
Cry = a pack of hounds; hence "a theatrical company." The word is used in hunting to signify a pack of hounds chosen so that their united barking may make a musical cry.
263. **Half a share**. An allusion to the custom of the day, when actors were paid not by salaries, but by shares of the takings according to their abilities.
266. **Realm dismantled**. Hamlet suggests that Denmark had been robbed of a King (his father), who could be compared to Jove, and was replaced by his uncle, whom he styles a peacock.
269. **Rhymed**. The rhyme to "was" (l. 266) would be "ass." Horatio suggests that this word would well describe Claudius.
270. **The ghost's word**. The conduct of the conscience-stricken Claudius has convinced Hamlet that the tale told him by his father's ghost is true.
275. **Recorder** = a kind of flageolet or flute. Here it refers to those playing upon that instrument.
291. **Purgation**. Here used in a double sense—  
(1) Legal = to clear oneself on oath.  
(2) Medical = means adopted to cure the patient.
294. **Frame** = connected order. The words "start not so wildly" and "tame" suggest an allusion to the tying of a restive horse in a frame when it is being shod.
320. **Pickers and stealers** = these hands. "To keep my hands from picking and stealing" (*Church Catechism*).
322. **You bar the door, etc.** You deny yourself freedom from your sorrows by refusing to tell your cause of grief to your friend.
328. "While the grass grows the steed starves" is the full quotation.
331. **To recover the wind**. A term in hunting. The hunter would lay the snare away from the windward side of the game. Then he would endeavour to stalk round to the windward side of the animal, which, scenting the hunter, would endeavour to escape in the direction of the wind and thus would be caught in the snare.
342. **Ventages**, the air-holes in the pipe of the recorder.  
**Stops** (l. 345) signifies the stopping of the holes with the fingers, thus producing the different notes on the instrument.
354. **'Sblood** = an oath = God's blood.
365. **Backed like a weasel** = its back is shaped like that of a weasel. Polonius is so bent upon humouring Hamlet that he actually sees a likeness to the back of a weasel in the hump of a camel.

369. **They fool me to the top of my bent** = they humour me in whatever I say. Hamlet is thus assured that he is regarded as being mad. It is a common practice in the treatment of lunatics to appear to agree with everything they say, in order to soothe them, and not to give them cause for irritation.
380. **Soul of Nero.** Nero murdered his mother, Agrippina. Hamlet prays that he may not, in his resentment for the death of his father, commit a similar crime.
385. **Give them seals.** To affix seals to a document is to give it legal validity. So Hamlet prays that he may not in impulse be let to give effect to his words by committing the crime of matricide.

## SCENE III.

11. **Single and peculiar life.** Single life = the life of an individual. Peculiar life = that he is a private person, with no public issues dependent upon his life. Rosencrantz is comparing Hamlet, a private individual, with the king, upon whose life the whole state depends in a certain degree.
20. **Mortised** = joined with a mortise. To mortise is to cut out a portion of one piece of wood to receive a corresponding portion called the *tenon*, or holder of another piece. Thus the two pieces are firmly united to each other.  
**Which** = the ruin of which (see l. 22).
31. **Annexment** = that which is annexed. A word not found elsewhere in Shakespeare.

25. **Fear** = Hamlet, the object of the king's fear.
29. **Process** = the full recital. *Fr. proces verbal* = the official transcription of a statement made before a magistrate.  
**Tax him home** = thoroughly probe or examine him, and get the whole truth out of it.
33. **Of vantage** = from a position of advantage. Polonius will have the advantage of Hamlet in being able from his place of concealment to hear all that passes between Hamlet and his mother.
37. **Primal eldest curse** = the curse of Cain. Cain was the eldest son of Adam, and the first murderer.
61. **The action lies.** A legal phrase meaning that "there is ground for commencing the suit at law."
63. **Limed soul.** A soul entangled in sin, as a bird caught by means of bird-lime. The more it struggles the more it becomes smeared with the sticky substance.

## SCENE IV.

23. **Dead, for a ducat.** I will wager a ducat that he is dead.
25. **Is it the king?** Hamlet naturally thinks that it was the king who had concealed himself behind the tapestry. He acted upon impulse, but it is clear (see l. 32) that he intended to kill his uncle.
36. **Penetrable** = capable of receiving moral impressions.
37. **Brazed** = become hardened like brass.
38. **Proof** = unpenetrable.
44. **Sets a blister** = brands as a wanton. Such persons were liable to be branded on the forehead.

48. **Rhapsody of words** = a confused utterance of words without connection.
52. **Index** = prologue to a play, or preface. The index was formerly placed at the commencement of a book, not at the end.
59. **Heaven-kissing** = reaching to the clouds.
98. **A Vice of kings.** The Vice was one of the characters in the Moral Plays. He acted the part of the buffoon, and supplied the comic element. He was so named from the vicious or mischievous qualities attributed to him. He wore a motley or patch-work dress. The fool or clown in later plays was developed from the Vice of these old Morality Plays. So "Vice of King" = a very buffoon or clown of a king.
99. **Outpurse** = a thief. The purse was worn outside, attached to the girdle. A thief used to cut the purse away from the girdle, and thus possess himself of the money.
102. **A king of shreds and patches,** referring to the motley dress worn by the Vice (l. 98).
103. When the Ghost first appeared to Hamlet he was visible to others, even before he was seen by Hamlet. Now he is seen by Hamlet alone. So the ghost of Banquo appears to Macbeth only.
135. **Habit.** Note the differences between this appearance and the former visits of the Ghost. At the castle he appears to those on guard as well as to Hamlet, he is clad in complete armour and stalks away.
- Now he appears to Hamlet alone, is clad in royal garb, and steals away.
175. **Their scourge and minister.** Their = of heaven. Scourge = the instrument to inflict the punishment decreed by heaven.  
Minister = the servant to obey heaven's commands.
183. **Mouse** = a term of endearment.
190. **Paddock** = a toad. Hamlet compares the queen's telling the king what had taken place to the custom of witches consulting toads, bats and cats. **Gib** = a tom-cat. It is a contraction of Gilbert, and was a name often given to a cat.
194. **The famous ape.** An allusion to some fable well-known at the time, but now forgotten. From the text we may gather that it is a fable concerning an ape who having watched birds fly out of a basket which was opened to let them loose at the top of a house, endeavoured ape-like to imitate them. He crept into the basket, then jumped out as if to fly like the birds, and fell to the ground breaking his neck.
195. **To try conclusions** = to make experiment.
204. **Mandate** = the commission of the king entrusted to Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern to take to England.
207. **Petard,** a kind of mortar used for blowing open gates and doors. Hamlet pictures the engineer whose duty it was to place the petard in position against the gate, as being blown up by the premature explosion of his own petard.

31. **Packing** = (1) plotting, i.e. Hamlet must set to work at once to meet the plots of his enemies by a counterplot, or (2) that he will be sent off at once for England.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

1. **Matter** = some important reason causing the sighs.  
 3. **Your son** = yours (the queen's), not mine (the king's).  
 18. **Kept short** = on a short tether, under strict guard.  
**Out of haunt** = apart from his companions, or away from the usual haunts of men.  
 42. **Blank** = the mark or target. The mark in the target would be painted white.

SCENE II.

12. **Spunge**. Taken from a saying of the Emperor Vespasian, who, when found fault with for the appointment of rapacious officers, replied, "that he served his turn with such officers as with sponges, which, when they had drunk their fill, were fittest to be pressed."  
 23. **A knavish speech**, etc. This has become a proverb.  
 30. **Hide fox**, etc. This is said to have been a name for the game of "Hide and Seek."

SCENE III.

21. **Politic worms**. An allusion to the famous Diet of Worms, before which Martin Luther was summoned to appear, A.D. 1521.

24. **Variable service**. Variable = various—referring to the different courses of a dinner.

32. **Progress**, the technical term for a royal journey of state.

38. **Lobby** = a passage or waiting room.

45. **At help** = ready to help, i.e. favourable.

49. **I see a cherub**, etc. This has been variously interpreted—

- (1) The modern saying, "a little bird told me."

- (2) I have an inkling of your intentions.

- (3) The angels are fighting on my side.

- (4) My times are in God's hand.

62. **Free awe**. The superior might of Denmark is now freely acknowledged by England.

65. **Conjuring** = calling upon him to do our bidding. Quartos read, "conjuring" = that the letters agree with the verbal message, calling for the death of Hamlet.

SCENE IV.

15. **The main**, either (1) the mainland of Poland, or (2) the main body of the Polish forces.

22. **Sold in fee**. This means an absolute sale conveying all rights in the land.

36. **Large discourse** = a wide range of intelligence, and power of reason.

40. **Bestial oblivion** = forgetfulness, worthy only of one of the lower animals.

50. **Invisible event**. Event = issue or result. An issue that cannot be foreseen.

64. **Continent**. In the sense of "that which holds or contains anything."

## SCENE V.

9. **Collection**, etc. = to gather up the disjointed remarks of Ophelia, and to endeavour to aim or guess at their meaning.
10. **Botch** = to put to pieces clumsily, to mend unskilfully.
15. **Ill-breeding minds**. Minds ready to conceive mischief.
25. **Cockle hat and staff**, etc. Alluding to the dress of a pilgrim. The cockle shell was worn in the hat as an emblem of their intention to go beyond the sea to the Holy Land. A pilgrim's dress, being held sacred, was often worn as a disguise in love adventures.
39. **True love-showers**. Tears showered upon his grave by those who truly loved him.
41. **The baker's daughter**. A tradition current in Gloucestershire is related by Douce:—"Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking and asked for bread. The mistress put some dough in the oven to bake for him. The daughter protested that it was too large, and reduced it to a very small size. The dough began to swell and became of enormous size. The baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise, probably, induced our Saviour, for her wickedness, to transform her into that bird. The story was often told to children as a warning against churlish behaviour towards poor people."
50. **Donned** = do on or put on.
51. **Dupped** = do up, i.e. pushed the latch up and so opened the door.
57. **By Gis**. There is no saint of such name. The word is probably a corruption of I.H.S.
64. **My coach**, i.e. calling for her carriage. An anachronism (see p. x.).
69. **Single spies** = singly, one by one, as spies, not in companies.
75. **Hugger-mugger** = secretly, hurriedly, and without ceremony.
86. **Murdering-piece**. The name given to a cannon or mortar when loaded with case shot scattering bullets when fired and thus wounding many by a single discharge.
88. **Switzers** = My body guard. An allusion to the practice of the French Kings in employing Swiss soldiers as their body guard. An anachronism (see p. x.).
90. **List**. A barrier or boundary, enclosing a space, and intended to prevent spectators encroaching on the ground railed off.
92. **Riotous head**. Head = An armed force. Laertes is at the head of an armed rabble.
101. **Counter**. A hunting term descriptive of hounds taking up a false trail, or running back upon the true one. We may note the attitude of both King and Queen. The King faces Laertes in a dignified manner. Secure, as he thinks, by Hamlet's absence he meets Laertes with calm assurance, asserting the divine right of Kings (l. 111). The Queen staunchly upholds her consort. She seizes Laertes to prevent him striking the King (ll. 110-114), and asserts that the charge is false, for, of course, she knew that Hamlet had slain Polonius.

122. **Both the worlds**, i.e. this world and the next. Laertes casts off all ties of duty in both worlds—viz. "his allegiance" and "vows" of fealty to the King in this world, "conscience and grace" in the next.

125. **My will may mean—**  
 (1) Only by the accomplishment of my purpose.  
 (2) My own change of purpose, for nothing else shall stay me.

130. **Sweepstake.** A wager where the winner "sweeps in" all the money staked, receiving both his own stake and that of any loser.

134. **Life-rendering** = giving up its own life. An allusion to the fable which represents that the pelican pierced its breast and fed its young on its own blood.

159. **The Wheel.** Ophelia is uttering snatches of old ballads sung to the spinning wheel. Another suggestion is that the "wheel" means the refrain of a song.

162. We may note how Ophelia suits the flowers to the several persons,

To Laertes—

*Rosemary* = remembrance.

*Pansies* = thoughts.

As if to say—keep me in memory in your thoughts.

To the King—

*Fennel* = flattery.

*Columbine* = ingratitude.

Thus marking the two great faults of the King.

To the Queen—

*Rue* = ruth or sorrow.

*Daisy* = faithlessness.

Again marking the sorrow (*ruth*) coming upon the queen for her faithlessness (*daisy*) towards her first husband. We may also notice the delicate

hint that she cannot give the queen violets, the emblem of faithfulness.

165. Laertes may well term this distribution "a document in madness."

*Document*, here = a lesson, an instruction, an example.

170. **With a difference.** An heraldic term denoting the slight change in a coat of arms to distinguish the different members of the same family.

The phrase is intended to point out that Ophelia and the Queen had different causes for their respective sorrows.

Ophelia mourns for her dead father.

The Queen will meet with sorrow in punishment for her hasty marriage.

173. **Bonny sweet Robin.** A well-known ballad on Robin Hood.

201. **Hatchment**, an escutcheon. Knights and persons of rank were buried with great ceremony, and "the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs and tabard were hung over the tomb."

#### SCENE VI.

26. **Bore of the matter.** Bore refers to some large piece of ordnance discharging a heavy shot. Hamlet suggests that his words are too light for the occasion, like shot too small to fit the barrel of a large cannon.

#### SCENE VII.

7. **Capital** = deserving of the death penalty. (Lat. *caput*, the head).

10. **Unsinewed** = without nerve or sinew, so, lacking strength, insufficient for the purpose.

15. **Sphere.** An allusion to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, which supposed the universe to be composed of hollow spheres, one within the other.
20. **Spring.** A reference to lime springs. These springs are so impregnated with lime that they deposit a coating of lime upon any substance placed in them, and so apparently petrify or turn it into stone. Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, is famous for such a well.
21. **Gyves** = fetters for the ankles.
22. **Too slightly timbered** = an arrow with too slender and light a shaft, so that its flight is strongly affected by the wind.
23. **Stood challenger.** "The allusion must be to the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany; as King of Hungary; when on the Mount of Desiance, at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and shaking it towards north, south, east and west challenges the four corners of the earth to dispute his rights." —MOBERLY.
47. **More strange.** The return was sudden, and that was strange, but the strangest thing to the king's mind was that Hamlet should return at all.
50. **Naked,** either (1) alone, without attendants, or (2) having lost all his possessions.
61. **Checking.** A metaphor taken from falconry. The falcon was said "to check," if it left the proper game to fly after some other bird.
72. **Your sum of parts.** Parts = qualities. The king means that Hamlet did not envy
- Laertes, all his good qualities put together, but only his skill as a fencer.
75. **Unworthiest siege.** Siege = seat. Persons sat at table according to their rank or position. Unworthiest siege = of lowest rank, i.e. taking the lowest seat at table.
86. **Incorpsed and demi-natured.** Descriptive of a good horseman, who sits his steed as if he were part of the animal.
92. **Brooch** = any conspicuous ornament. Generally worn in the cap as is the custom amongst the Highlanders of Scotland in the present day.
95. **Masterly report** = his high eulogium on your wonderful skill in fencing. He reported you a master of the art.
116. **Plurisy,** this word must not be confounded with "*pleurisy*," a disease of the lungs, which is derived from *pleura*, a part of the lungs. Plurisy here is a word derived from the Latin *plus*, *pluris*, more, and signifies "excess," "too much."
121. **Spendthrift sigh.** A sigh that wastes the vital flame. It was a common notion that sighs impaired the strength, and wore out the vitality.
122. **That hurts by easing.** The sigh relieves the mind, but, according to the notion above, injured the strength of the body.
126. **Sanctuarize** = be a shelter or protection to a murderer. "Murder should not have the protection of privilege or sanctuary in any place." An allusion to the right of sanctuary.

Certain religious places were privileged to give protection to those who took refuge there, not only to escape from some private enemy, but even if they were criminals against the law.

143. **Simples** = herbs, so-called because each herb was supposed to possess a simple or single element. **Simples** also means the elements making up any mixture or compound.
172. **Sliver** = a branch broken off from a tree.
198. **The woman will be out.** My present weakness in weeping like a woman will end with my tears, and I shall then be fit and ready to do a man's work in avenging the deaths of my father and of my sister.

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

2. **Wilfully.** The body of a person committing suicide is buried without the usual ceremonies of the Church.
4. **Crowner** = coroner, i.e. an officer under the Crown.
9. **Se offendendo.** The clown's mistake for *se defendendo*, which is, however, the verdict in the case of justifiable homicide. *Se offendendo* = by attacking himself—and so can well describe an act of suicide.
11. **The branches.** The clown defines the three parts of any deed.
- (1) The inception in the mind.
  - (2) The resolution to act.
  - (3) The actual performance.
14. **Goodman delver.** The first clown is the sexton proper, the second clown is his assis-

tant, a mere labourer employed to dig the graves.

31. **Adam's profession, i.e.** that of a gardener, and so "a delver" or digger.
- "*When Adam delved and Eve span Who was then the gentleman.*"
52. **Unyoke.** An expression borrowed from husbandry. When the day's work is done the team is unyoked or unharnessed. So the phrase means "then your task of guessing can be regarded as completed."
60. **Yaughan.** An alehouse near the Globe Theatre, was kept by a Jew named Johan. It is suggested that "Yaughan" is a corruption of this name.
61. These verses inaccurately rendered are taken from "*The aged lover renounceth love*," in Tottel's Miscellany, 1557.
67. **Property of easiness.** Property = something specially his own. Long custom in burying the dead had rendered the gravedigger indifferent to the mournful task. It was part of his usual routine, and his singing over his task came natural to him.
77. **Cain's jaw-bone.** An allusion to the old tradition that Cain slew his brother Abel with the jaw-bone of an ass.
79. **O'erreaches.** In the sense of goes beyond, surpasses. Hamlet means that the humble gravedigger is now the superior of the dead politician. It may also mean "reaches over for," in order to put it back into the ground.
88. **My Lady Worm's.** This skull which was once my Lord such-a-one's (l. 84) is now my Lady Worm's.



92. **Loggats**, diminutive of log = a small piece of wood. Loggats was a game which somewhat resembled bowls. It was played, not upon a green, but on a sanded floor. It consisted in pitching cone-shaped pieces of wood at a Jack in the shape of a ring.

109. **Pair of indentures**. Such agreements are always drawn up and signed in duplicate, each party to the agreement retaining a copy.

138. **By the card** = precisely or exactly, taking this meaning from

(1) A ship's chart, which would be accurately drawn.

or (2) A card of etiquette, containing precise instructions on behaviour.

or (3) The actor's card on which his part was exactly written out.

227. **Doubtful**, i.e. no evidence to show if Ophelia's death had been accidental, or that she had committed suicide

230. **Unsanctified** = unconsecrated. Alluding to the ancient practice of burying suicides away from the churchyard.

234. **Strewments** = strewing her grave with flowers.

**The bringing home**. The body of Ophelia is carried to the grave (her last home), to the sound of the tolling bell, as a bride is welcomed to her home by the merry chimes of the wedding bells.

277. **Esil**. Various interpreted as

(1) The name of some river as

(a) The *Yssel*, a branch of the Rhine.

(b) The *Weissel*.

(c) The *Nile*, suggested by the mention of the crocodiles.

(2) *Eisel* = Vinegar.

284. **Ossa like a wart** = cause a mountain to appear to be no larger than a pimple.

288. **Golden couplets**. The dove lays two eggs and no more. The young on appearing from the shell are covered with yellow golden down.

Disclosed is the technical term for the young bird chipping the shell and first appearing.

299. **Living monument**. The king may be referring to an enduring, lasting monument placed over the grave, or he may mean that the death of Hamlet shall be metaphorically the monument.

## SCENE II.

### 6. Mutines in the bilboes.

Mutines = mutineers.

Bilboes, the name for the ship's prison, and also for the stocks or fetters used on board ship. The bilboes were iron bars with rings at each end.

11. **Rough-hew**, i.e. as a carpenter first works a piece of timber, before finally planing and smoothing it to exact shape and workmanship.

13. **Scarfed**. A verb formed from the noun = to throw the garment round one like a scarf.

36. **Yeoman's service**. The yeomen (see p. 195) were the small freeholders of England. The allusion is to the great part taken by English yeomen as archers and infantry in the

wars of the 14th and 15th centuries. The phrase has become proverbial for "good and faithful service."

42. **A comma 'tween their amities.** Blending close connection between England and Denmark. The idea is connection not separation. "A comma is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the period is the note of abruptness and disjunction."  
—JOHNSON.

47. **Not shriving-time allowed,** i.e. their death was immediate, and with no time allowed for confession to a priest.

53. **Changeling never known.** Hamlet compares his substitution of his letter for that of the King's to the supposed practice of fairies, who were believed to take away very beautiful children at their birth, and to replace them with ugly ones. The child brought by the fairy was termed a *changeling*.

77. **Image of my cause.** Hamlet can sympathize with Laertes in his grief and indignation, for he knows him to be in a similar case to himself. Hamlet had lost his father, murdered; so had Laertes lost his father, Polonius. Both Hamlet and Laertes mourned for Ophelia, the one for his lover, and the other for his sister.

84. **Water-fly.** A fly which skims up and down a stream, descriptive of Osric, a mere trifler or hanger-on at Court.

94. **Your bonnet to its right use.** Put your cap on your head, and do not stand before me uncovered like an obsequious courtier.

111. **Card.** Johnson points out the distinction between the card and the calendar.

Card or chart, by which to direct his conduct.

Calendar, by which to choose his time.

So he knows both how and when to behave.

152. **Hangers** = the straps by which the sword is attached to the belt.

163. **Twelve for nine.** The terms of the wager. The King wagers that Laertes would hit Hamlet twelve times before Hamlet hit him nine times.

175. **Breathing time of day** = the time of day taken up in exercise.

187. **Lapwing.** The lapwing was supposed to run away with its shell on its back in its eagerness to be hatched after coming out of the shell. Hamlet terms Osric a lapwing, i.e. calls him a forward fellow.

189. **Comply with his dug,** i.e. Osric was imbued with foppish politeness from his birth, so much so as to compliment the breast before he sucked it.

192. **Outward habit of encounter.** To encounter = to address. Outside polish of manner—vencer of courtesy.

193. **Yesty collection** = frothy opinions gathered from anywhere.

205. **In happy time** = just at the right time to witness our fencing match.

212. **At the odds,** i.e. of 12 to 9 (l. 163). Good fencer though Laertes may be Hamlet is confident that from his own practice he is able to meet him on the above terms of the match.

**372. Union.** A very precious pearl (see p. 194). To swallow a pearl in a draught was a piece of extravagance not uncommon in ancient times.

**303. They change rapiers.**

A stage direction.

This is brought about differently by various actors.

(1) Mutual disarmament, each picks up the nearest rapier and thus gets his opponent's weapon.

(2) Hamlet disarms Laertes, and then courteously offers him his own weapon.

(3) Laertes rushes in to close quarters and seizes Hamlet's rapier by the hilt. The proper way to meet this attack would be for Hamlet to seize the hilt of Laertes' sword—thus the exchange is made.

**355. Mutes** = silent spectators. The Court generally were, of course, in ignorance of the plot against Hamlet's life.

**340. The unsatisfied**, i.e. those who could not understand Hamlet's action in stabbing the King. The dying Hamlet entreats Horatio to explain his acting so that all might see what good cause he had for the deed.

**341. Roman.** An allusion to the Romans of old, who preferred

death to a life of disgrace, e.g. Cato.

**344. Wounded name.** Unless the truth is known my name will remain as being stained with the crime of the assassination of the King.

**381. Unnatural acts**, viz. the murder of Hamlet's father; the hasty marriage of his mother; the plots of the King against Hamlet.

**382. Accidental judgments**, viz. the death of Polonius stabbed by Hamlet in mistake for the King; the death of the Queen on drinking the poisoned cup intended for Hamlet.

**Casual slaughters**, the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

**333. Cunning**, the death of Laertes, his own device recoiling on himself.

**Forced**, the death of the King, well merited by his crimes.

**384. Upshot.** A term in archery. = the last shot. The death of Hamlet was the final act in the drama of murder and death.

**389. Rights of memory** = rights which the Danes must remember are well founded. Fortinbras is alluding to his claim to succeed to the throne of Denmark now that both the King and Hamlet are dead.

## VERSIFICATION.

For this we have followed somewhat closely the lines laid down by Abbot in his Shakespearian Grammar.

- (1) The ordinary line of Blank Verse or Iambic Pentameter consists of five feet (Pentameter) of two syllables, each with the accent on the second syllable (Iambus).

[A foot with the accent on the first syllable is called a Trochee]

"Was false' | ly borne' | in hand', | —and sends' | arrest' || (II. ii. 67).

On Fort' | inbras'; | which he', | in brief, | obeys' || (II. ii. 68).

Receives' | rebuke' | from Nor' | way: and', | in fine, (II. ii. 69).

Makes vows' | before' | his un' | cle nev' | er more' || (II. ii. 70).

- (2) A Trochee often occurs, especially as the first foot of a line.

"Looks' it | not like' | the king' ? | mark it', | Horat'io || (I. i. 43).

"Cost'ly | thy hab' | it as' | thy purse' | can buy' ||" (I. iii. 70).

"Mar'ry, | I'll teach' | you: think' | yourself | a baby' ||" (I. iii. 105).

"Run'ning | it thus', | you'll tend' | er me' | a fool' ||" (I. iii. 109).

"When' the | blood burns' | how prod' | ical' | the so'ul ||" (I. iii. 116).

"Why' to | a pub' | lic count' | I may' | not go' ||" (IV. vii. 17).

Examples of a Trochee not as the first foot of a line.

"Affect' | ion! pooh'! | you speak' | like' a | green girl' ||" (I. iii. 101)

"A broth' | er's mur' | der'! | Pray' can | I not' ||" (III. iii. 83).

- (3) An extra syllable is often added before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

"But not' | expressed' | in fan' | cy; rich', | not gaudy' ||" (I. iii. 71).

"And that' | in way' | of caut' | ion I | must tell' you ||" (I. iii. 95).

"You' do | not und' | ersta'nd | yourself' | so clearly' ||" (I. iii. 96).

"As' it | behoves' | my daugh' | ter and' | your honour' ||" (I. iii. 97).

"Do not' | believe' | his vows': | for they' | are bro'kers' ||" (I. iii. 127).

Example of extra syllables in the middle of a line.

"Had he' | been van'quisher, | as by' | the same' | covenant', ||" (I. i. 93).

- (4) Accented Monosyllables and prepositions. Sometimes an unemphatic monosyllable is allowed to stand in an emphatic place, and to receive an accent.

"So please' | you some' | thing touch' | ing the' | Lord Ham'let ||" (I. iii. 89).

- (5) Two extra syllables are sometimes allowed, if unemphatic, before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

"Had he' | been van'quisher, | as by' | the same' | covenant' ||" (I. i. 93).

"My lord, | I came' | to see' | your fa' | ther's fu'neral' ||" (I. ii. 176).

"And meant' | to wreck' | thee; but' | beshrew' | my jeal'ousy' ||" (II. i. 111).

"O'erbears' | your officers'! | The rab' | ble call' | hian King' ||" (IV. v. 93).

- (6) Prefixes are dropped in the following words:—

'Count for "account."

'Gain-giving for "against giving."

'Gainst for "against."

'Haviour for "behaviour."

'Noyance for "annoyance."

'Tend for "attend."

- (7) R frequently softens or destroys a following vowel (the vowel being nearly lost in the burr which follows the r).

"And then', | they say', | no spirit' | dares stir' | abroad' ||" (I. i. 161).

*Ham.* Perchance', | 'twill walk' | again. |

*Eor.* I warrant' | it will' || (I. ii. 243).

'My fa' | ther's spirit' | in arms! | all is' | not well' ||" (I. ii. 255).

"For'ward, | not per' | manent', | sweet' | not lasting' ||" (I. iii. 8).

"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak and' | with no | addi'tion ||" (IV. iv. 17).

"I'll be | with you strai' | ght. Go' | a little' | before' ||" (IV. iv. 31).

"Be thou' | a spirit' | of health', | or gob' | lin dam'n'd ||" (I. iv. 40).

- (8) Whether and Ever, and similar words pronounced as one syllable.

"Whether love' | lead for | tune, or' | else for' | tune love' ||" (III. ii. 190).

"But never' | the offence'. | To bear' | all smooth' | and even' ||" (IV. iii. 7).

"To fust' | in us' | unused'. | Now whether' | it be' ||" (IV. iv. 39).

- (9) I in the middle of a trisyllable, if unaccented, is frequently dropped.

"To do' | obse' | quious sorrow' | but to' | perse' ver' ||" (I. ii. 92).

"Himself' | the prim' | rose path' | of dall' | iance trea'ds ||" (I. iii. 50).

"Unsit' | ed in' | such pe'ril' | ous cir' | cumstance' ||" (I. iii. 102).

"And ted' | iousness' | the limbs' | and out' | ward flour'ishes ||" (II. ii. 91).

- (10) Any unaccented syllable of a polysyllable may sometimes be softened and almost ignored.

"A lit' | tle are' | the migh't | iest Jul' | ius fell', ||" (I. i. 114).

"The graves' | stood tenant' | less, and' | the sheet' | ed dead' ||" (I. i. 115).

"A count' | enance more' | in sor' | row than' | in anger' ||" (I. ii. 232).

"And hath' | given coun't | enance to' | his speech', | my lord' ||" (I. iii. 112).

"As fits' | a king's' | remem' | brance. Both' | your maj'esties ||" (II. ii. 26).

"To give' | the assay' | of arms' | against' | your maj'esty ||" (II. ii. 71).

- (11) Polysyllabic names often receive but one accent at the end of the line in pronunciation.

"Thou art' | a schol' | ar; spea'k | to it', | Hora'tio ||" (I. i. 42).

"I pray' | thee stay' | with us', | go not' | to Wit'tenberg ||" (I. ii. 119).

- Or we may scan—

"I pray thee (*pri'thee*) stay' | with us', | go not' | to Wit't' | enber'g' ||

"Then may' | be gi'v' | en you': | In few', | Oph'elia ||" (I. iii. 126).

"When thou' | blest how! | ing. What' | the fair' | Oph'elia ||" (V. i. 243).

- Examples in the middle of a line—

"How now', | Hora'tio? | you trem' | ble and' | look pale' ||" (I. i. 53).

"Thrift, thrift', | Hora'tio! | the fun' | eral' | baked meats' ||" (I. ii. 180).

- (12) Words in which a light vowel is preceded by a heavy vowel or diphthong are frequently contracted.

"We do' | it wrong', | being so' | majest' | io'al ||" (I. i. 143).

"Of en' | trance to' | a quarr' | el: but' | being in' ||" (I. iii. 66).

"That you' | at such' | times seeing' | me nev' | er shall' ||" (I. v. 157).

"Will' so | bestow' | ourselves' | that, seeing', | unseen' ||" (III. i. 83).

- (13) Ed following d or t is often not pronounced, even if written.

"I had' | not quot'ed him | I fear'd' | he did' | but trife' ||" (II. i. 110).

- (14) *Er* final pronounced with a kind of "burr," giving the effect of an additional syllable.

"Lends' the | tongue vows' ; | these blas' | es, daugh | ter' ||" (I. iii. 117).

"To speak' | of hor' | rors, - | he comes' | before' me ||" (II. i. 82).

"A broth' | or's mur | der' ? | Pray' can | I not' ||" (III. iii. 88).

- (15) The terminative "*ion*" is frequently pronounced as two syllables at the end of a line. The *i* is also sometimes pronounced in such words as *soldier*, *marriage*, *conscience*, etc.; and the *e* in *surgeons*, *vengeance*, etc.

"As you' | are friends', | scholars, | and sol | diers' ||" (I. v. 125).

"Of Ham' | let's trans' | forma' | tion'. | So call' it ||" (II. ii. 5).

"Do not' | forget' : | this vis' | ita't | ion' ||" (III. iv. 110).

"With sor'e | distract' | ion'. | What have' | I done' ? ||" (V. ii. 230).

- (16) Fear, dear, year, fire, and other monosyllables ending in *r* or *re*, preceded by a long vowel or diphthong, are frequently pronounced as dissyllables.

"Hor. Where', | my lord' ? |

Ham. In' my | mind's eye', | Hor'atio ||" (I. ii. 185).

"You must' | not take' | for fi' | re. From' | this time'. ||" (I. iii. 120).

"Fear' | me not : | withdraw', | I hear' | him coming' ||" (III. iv. 7).

- (17) Monosyllabic (1) exclamations; (2) emphasized by position or antithesis; (3) containing long vowels or diphthongs; (4) containing a vowel followed by *r*.

"Where'fore | should you' | do this' ? | Ay', | my lord' ||" (II. i. 36).

"Thence' to | a watch' ; | thence' | into' | a weak'ness ||" (II. ii. 149).

"The devil' | himself. |

O' 'tis' | too true' ! | how sm'art ||" (III. i. 49).

"One wor' | d more', | good lady'. |

What shall' | I do' ||" (III. iv. 180).

"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak, sir', | and with' | no addit'ion ||" (IV. iv. 17).

- Or as a Trimeter Couplet.

"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak, sir', | and with' | no add' | it'ion',"

- or "Tru'ly | to speak' | and with no' | addit' | ion'. ||"

"I will be' | with you stral' | ght. Go' | a little' | befo're ||" (IV. iv. 81).

"To hide' | the stain' ? | O' | from this' | time forth ||" (IV. iv. 65).

"Will you' | be ruled' | by me' ? | Ay', | my lo'rd ||" (IV. vii. 58).

- (18) Accent

1. Words in which the accent is nearer the end than with us.

Aspect'. Tears' in | her eyes', | distract' | ion in's' | aspect' ||" (II. ii. 556).

Canon'ized. "Why thy' | canon' | ized bones' | hearsed' | in death' ||" (I. iv. 47).

Chara'cter. "Look' thou | charact' | er. Give' | thy thought's | no tong'us ||" (I. iii. 59).

Commend'able. "'Tis sweet and | commend' | able in' | your na' | ture Ham'let ||" (I. ii. 87).

Compact' (*noun*). "Did slay' | this Fort'inbras ; | who by | a seal'd' | compact' ||" (I. i. 86).

Comrade'. "Of each' | new-hatched', | unfledged' | comrade'. | Beware' ||" (I. iii. 65).

- Contra'ry. "Our wills' | and fates' | do so' | contra' | ry run' ||" (III. ii. 198).
- Converse'. "Your par' | ty in' | converse', | him you' | would sound' ||" (II. i. 42).
- Purpo'rt. "And with' | a look' | so pit' | eous in' | purport' ||" (II. i. 80).
- Records' (*noun*). "I'll wipe' | away' | all triv' | ial fond' | records' ||" (I. v. 83).
- Reve'nue. "That no' | reve' | nue hast' | but thy' | good spirits' ||" (III. ii. 57).
2. Words in which the accent is nearer the beginning than with us,
- Ab'surd. No, let' | the cand' | ied tongue' | lick ab' | surd pomp' ||" (III. ii. 59).
- Co'mplete. "That thou', | dead corse', | again', | in comp' | letesteel' ||" (I. iv. 52).
- En'gineer. "For 'tis | the sport' | to have' | the en'gineer' ||" (III. iv. 206).
- So Abbott, but it is better to scan "*engineer*" with two accents.
- "For 'tis | the sport' | to have' | the en' | gineer' ||" (III. iv. 206).
- Importuned. "My lord', | he hath' | import' | uned me' | with love' ||" (I. iii. 110).
- Ob'scure. "His means' | of death', | his ob' | scure fun' | eral' ||" (IV. v. 200).
- Perse'ver. "I do' | obs'e | quious sorrow' | but to' | perse'ver' ||" (I. ii. 92).
- Pi'oneer. "A worth' | y pi'oneer! | Once more' | remove', | good friends' ||" (I. v. 147).
- Se'cure. "Up'on | my se' | cure hour' | thy un' | cle stole' ||" (I. v. 45).
- (19) A Proper Alexandrine (*i.e.* a line with six accents) is rarely found in Shakespeare.
- An example of an Alexandrine.
- "And now' | by winds' | and waves' | my life' | less limbs' | are tossed' ||" DRYDEN.
- (20) Apparent Alexandrines.
- "Had he' | been van'quisher; | as, by' | the same' | covenant' ||" (I. i. 93).
- Both *vanquisher* and "*covenant*" are examples of extra syllables in the foot (see 3).
- "Hyper' | ion to' | a sa'tyr: | so lov' | ing to' | my mo'ther ||" (I. ii. 140).
- Hor.* "Hail' | to your lord'ship! |
- Ham.* I am (*I'm*) glad' | to see' | you well' ||" (I. ii. 160).
- "Unto that' | element' | but long' | it could' | not be' ||" (IV. vii. 179).
- "*Unt' that*," "*el'ment*" are contracted.
- "I'll be' | your foil', | La'ertes, in | mine ig' | norance' ||" (V. ii. 255).
- (21) Many apparent Alexandrines are Trimeter Couplets, or two verses of three accents each.
- "Where'of | he is' | the head': || then', if | he says' | he loves' you ||" (I. iii. 24).
- "To what' | I shall' | unfold' ||
- Speak', I | am bound' | to hear' ||" (I. v. 7).
- "God will' | ing, shall' | not lack'. || Let us' | go in' | toge'ther ||" (I. v. 171).

"Contag' | ion to' | this world'. || Now could' | I drink' | hot blood' || "  
(III. ii. 376).

"Ov'er | the nast' | y sty',—

O, speak' | to me' | no more' || " (III. iv. 94).

"To whom' | do you | speak this' ? ||

Do you' | see no' | thing there' || " (III. iv. 131).

"Nor did' | you no' | thing hear' ? |

No, no' | thing but' | ourselves' || " (III. iv. 133).

"Of your' | dear fa' | ther's death', || is't writ' | in your' | revenge' || "  
(IV. v. 129).

- (22) **Amphibious section.** When a verse consists of two parts uttered by two speakers, the latter part of the first verse is frequently the former part of the following verse, being, as it were, amphibious.

"The bell' | then beat' | ing one'— |

Peace, break' | thee off' ; | look, where' | it comes' | again' || " (I. i. 39-40).

Oph. "Of his' | affect' | ion to me'. ||

Pol. *Affect' | ion ? pooh !* | You speak' | like' a | green girl' || "  
(I. iii. 100-1).

Ham. "You will' | reveal' it. ||

Hor. Not I, | my lord, | by heaven' ! |

Mar. Nor I, | my Lord' || " (I. v. 103).

Mar. Of his' true state ||

*Did he' | receive' | you well'.* ||

Most like' | a gen'tleman' || " (III. i. 10-11).

"Can you' | advise me'. ||

*I am lost' | in it, my lord.* | But let' | him come' || " (IV. vii. 52-3).

Sometimes a section will, on the one side, form part of a regular line, and on the other, part of a Trimeter Couplet.

Hor. "Of mine' | own eyes'. || Mar. *Is it | not like' | the King' ?* ||

Hor. As thou' | art to' | thyself' || " (I. i. 58-59).

Oph. "In hon' | oura' | ble fas'hion ||

Pol. *Ay, fash' | ion you' | may call it.* || Go to', | go to' || "  
(I. iii. 111-112).

Mar. "No, it | is struck'. |

Hor. *Indeed', | I heard' | it not' ;* || then it' | draws near' | the sea'son || " (I. iv. 4-5).

In the second line we may take "*indeed*" as a detached interjection as regards that line, *i.e.* the second portion of the section.

- (23) **Lines of four accents.**

"My father',— | methinks', | I see' | my father' || " (I. ii. 194).

"As he' | would draw' it. | Long stay'd | he so' || " (II. i. 89).

"Must give' | us pause'. | There's the | respect' || " (III. i. 65).

And many others.

- (24) **Lines are often broken up between two speakers.**

Mar. "It' is | offend' | ed.

See', | it stalks' | away' || " (I. i. 50)

Hor. "Do', if | it will' | not stand'. |



*Ber.* 'Tis here'. |  
*Hor.* 'Tis here' || " (I. i. 141).  
*Ghost.* "Mark' me, |

I will', |  
 My hour' | is a' | most come' || " (I. v. 2).

(25) Interruptions are sometimes not allowed to interfere with the completeness of the verse.

*Pol.* "Pray' you | be round' | with him'. |  
 (*Hamlet* [*within*] Mother, mother, mother).  
*Queen.* I'll war' | rant you' || " (III. iv. 5, 6).  
*Ham.* "There's a | divin' | ity' | that shapes' | our ends', |  
 Rough-hew' | them how' | we will'. |  
 (*Hor.* That is | most cer'tain)  
 Up from' | my ca'bin || " (V. ii. 10-12).

(26) Scan the following lines thus.

"I'll | speak to it' | though hell' | itself' | should gape' || " (I. ii. 245).  
 "Let' it | be ten' | able in' | your si' | lence still' || " (I. ii. 248).  
 "The sa' | fety' | and the health' | of the' | whole state' || " (I. iii. 21).  
 Scan "*safety*" as a trisyllable. The Folio reads "*sanctity*," so "*sanity*"  
 has been suggested as an emendation for "*safety*."  
 "Bear 't' that | the oppos' | er may' | beware' | of thes' || " (I. iii. 67).  
 "Have' of | your aud' | lence been' | most free' | and boun'tiful || "  
 (I. iii. 93).  
 "Which' are | not sterling'. | Ten'der | yourself' | more dearly' || "  
 (I. iii. 107).  
 "Why thy' | canon' | ized bones' | hearsed' | in death' || " (I. iv. 47).  
 "I had' | not quoted him' : | I fear'd' | he did' | but trifle' || " (II. i. 110).  
 "And thus' | o'er-siz' | ed with' | coag' | ulate gone' || " (II. ii. 462).  
 "What's Hec' | uba' | to him', | or he' | to Hec'uba || " (II. ii. 560).  
 "But never' | the offence'. | To bear' | all smooth' | and even' || "  
 (IV. iii. 7).  
 "But never" = But ne'er; "*the offence*" = Th' offence.  
 "Next' your | son gone'; | and he' | most vi' | (o)lent au'thor || "  
 (IV. v. 71).

Scan III. ii. 255—p. as eight and six.

"Why, let' | the strick' | en deer' | go weep', |  
 The hart' | ungail' | ed play', | etc. || "

Scan Ophelia's song thus:—

"And will' | a' not come' | again' ? |  
 And will' | a' not come' | again' ? |  
 No, no' | he is dead' : |  
 Go to' | thy death-bed' : |  
 He never' | will come' | again'. || "  
 "His beard' | was as white' | as snow', |  
 All flax' | en was' | his poll' : |  
 He is gone', | he is gone', |  
 And we cast' | away' | moan' ; |  
 God ha' mer' | cy on' | his soul' | || "

**Rhyme.** "Rhyme was often used as an effective termination at the end of a scene. When the scenery was not changed, or the arrangements were so defective that the change was not easily perceptible, it was perhaps additionally desirable to mark a scene that was finished."

"Rhyme was also sometimes used in the same conventional way to mark an *aside*, which otherwise the audience might have great difficulty in knowing to be an *aside*."—ABBOTT.

Examples of rhyme at the end of a scene are: I. ii., II. i., II. ii., III. i., III. ii., III. iii., IV. i., IV. iv., IV. v., V. i., V. ii.

**Prose.** Prose is not only used in comic scenes; it is adopted for letters (*M. of V.* IV. i. 149-66), and on other occasions when it is desirable to lower the dramatic pitch: for instance, in the more colloquial parts of the household scene between Volumnia and Virgilia (*Coriol.*, I. iii.), where the scene begins with prose, then passes into verse, and returns finally to prose. It is also used to express frenzy (*Othello*, IV. i. 84-44); and madness (*Lear*, IV. vi. 130), and the higher flights of the imagination.

Prose in *Hamlet* is:—

- II. ii. 169-449. Madness and colloquial.
- II. ii. 465-467. Colloquial.
- II. ii. 498-501. Colloquial.
- II. ii. 519-549. Colloquial.

[When his friends leave him Hamlet speaks in verse (550).]

- III. i. 100-148. Hamlet simulates madness when in conversation with Ophelia.
- III. ii. 1-52. Colloquial. Hamlet's conversation with the players.
- III. ii. 91-141, 168, 211, 216-254. Interruptions in the play scene; the prose marks the conversation of the audience.
- III. ii. 255-279. Colloquial; Hamlet conversing with Horatio.
- III. ii. 279-373. On the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet simulates madness.
- III. ii. 374-385. Now that Hamlet is alone he speaks in verse.
- IV. iii. 17-40 } Hamlet is simulating madness.
- IV. iii. 49-54 }
- IV. v. 21-65. Ophelia, really mad, speaks in prose
- IV. v. 152-187. Ophelia dressed with straws and flowers speaks in prose. Her madness becomes apparent to Laertes.
- IV. vi. 6-31. Colloquial between Hamlet and the sailors. The letter is also in prose.
- IV. vii. 43-47. A letter.
- V. i. 1-213. Partly Comedy, partly colloquial between the grave-diggers and Hamlet.
- V. ii. 81-224. The conversation with Osric. Colloquial.

## THE ENGLISH OF SHAKESPEARE.

The Student should closely examine the language of a play of Shakespeare, but not with the intention of discovering what he may consider grammatical errors. We must remember that the English of Shakespeare is the English of the Elizabethan period. Accordingly, a play should be studied with the object of contrasting Elizabethan and Victorian English.

The Student should note :—

## 1. The Elizabethan Period is transitional.

- (a) In the abandonment of inflections. Early English is marked by inflections. Modern English is marked by the comparative absence of inflections. Elizabethan English comes between the two.
- (b) Increase of intercourse with foreign nations and active maritime development caused an influx of new ideas, requiring the coining of new words and expressions to voice them.
- (c) The revival of classical studies enabled authors to enrich the language by words derived from Latin and Greek sources.

## 2. The chief characteristics of Elizabethan English are :

- (a) Clearness, Vigour and Emphasis.
- (b) Brevity.
- (c) The Interchangeability of Parts of Speech.
- (d) The Introduction of New Words.

Writers did not hesitate to sacrifice grammatical accuracy to clearness and brevity. In addition we must remember that the Plays were intended to be spoken, not read. Absolute grammatical accuracy and precise syntax might have produced polished sentences and phrases, but would have sacrificed the vigour and fire, which are such marked features of the Plays.

The following lists give illustrations of these characteristics of the language as found in the present Play :—

## 1. INTERCHANGEABILITY OF PARTS OF SPEECH.

Not only shall we find adjectives for adverbs, nouns as verbs, etc.—but abstract words used in a concrete sense. Transitive verbs used intransitively, and many other free methods indicative of the use of the Period. Some examples are :—

## 1. Adjectives.

## (a) Used interchangeably as Adverbs.

- "Tis *bitter* (bitterly) cold" (I. i. 8).
- "Goes *slow* (slowly) and stately by them" (I. ii. 204).
- "Very *like*, very *like*" = *likely* (I. ii. 226).
- "*New-hatched*" = newly hatched (I. iii. 85).
- "How *prodigal* (prodigally) the soul lends the tongue vows" (I. iii. 116).
- "Grow not *instant* (instantly) old" (I. v. 78).
- "This is *wondrous* (wonderfully) strange" (I. v. 158).
- "You shall do *marvellous* (marvellously) wisely, good Reynaldo" (II. i. 3).
- "I went round (*roundly*) to work" (II. ii. 140).
- "You say *right* (rightly)" (II. ii. 388).
- "We'll have a speech *straight*" (straightway, immediately) (II. ii. 430).
- "I am myself *indifferent* (fairly) honest" (III. i. 119).
- "*Excellent* (excellently) I' faith" (III. ii. 92).
- "Or come *tardy* (tardily) off" (III. ii. 25).

- "He will come *straight*" (straightway, immediately) (III. iv. 1).  
 "New-lighted" = newly lighted" (III. iv. 59).  
 "Pinch wanton (wantonly) on your cheek" (III. iv. 183).  
 "Speak fair (fairly, or fair words), and bring the body (IV. i. 36).  
 "Follow her close (closely)" (IV. v. 66).  
 "It shall as level (directly) to your judgment pierce" (IV. v. 139).  
 "And do't the *speedier* (= the more speedily)" (IV. vi. 32).  
 "It falls right (rightly)" (IV. vii. 69).  
 "It is indifferent (indifferently) cold" (V ii. 59).

(b) Used interchangeably as Nouns.

- "A list of lawless *resolute*" (I. i. 93) = resolute men.  
 "I shall in all my best obey you" (I. ii. 120).  
 "In the dead *vast* and middle of the night" (I. ii. 198).  
 "In *few*, Ophelia" (I. iii. 126).  
 "'Twas *caviare* to the *general*" (II. ii. 437) = the majority.  
 "Each toy seems prologue to some great *amiss*" (IV. v. 19) = misfortune.

(c) Used interchangeably as Verbs.

- "And gins to *pale* his ineffectual fire" (I. v. 74) = to make pale.  
 "And all his visage *wanned*" (II. ii. 555) = become wan or pale.  
 "We *fat* all creatures else to *fat* us; and we *fat* ourselves for maggots"  
 (IV. iii. 32-33) = to fatten.  
 "And since he's *bettered*" (IV. ii. 263) = has improved.

2. Nouns.

(a) Used interchangeably as Adjectives.

- "Maiden presence" (I. iii. 121).  
 "*Region* kites" (II. ii. 582).  
 "*Mute* vows" (III. i. 154).  
 "The *neighbour* room" (III. iv. 218).  
 "*Mountain* snow" (IV. v. 91).  
 "*Coronet* weeds" (IV. vii. 171).

(b) Used interchangeably as Adverbs.

- "We doubt it *nothing*" (I. ii. 41) = in no wise, not at all.  
 "This *something* settled matter" (III. i. 171) = somewhat.  
 "Discomfit you, my lord, it *nothing* must" (III. ii. 153) = in no wise.

(c) Used interchangeably as Verbs.

- "*Sharked* up a list of lawless *resolute*" (I. i. 93).  
 "To *business* with the King" (I. ii. 37).  
 "Cast thy *nighted* colour off" (I. ii. 68).  
 "The heavens shall *bruit* again" (I. ii. 127) = resound.  
 "Look thou *character*" (I. iii. 69) = engrave.  
 "It doth *posset* and *curd*" (I. v. 52-53). *Curd* may be abbreviation of "cradle."  
 "We do *sugar* o'er the devil himself" (III. i. 43).  
 "It *out-herod's* Herod" (III. ii. 14).  
 "You shall nose him as you go up the stairs" (IV. iii. 33) = smell.  
 "Repast them with my blood" (IV. v. 135) = feed them on.  
 "My sea-gown *scarfed* about me" (V. ii. 13) = wrapped about me as a scarf.

3. Verbs.

(a) Used interchangeably as Nouns.

- "Without the sensible and true *avouch*  
 Of mine own ears" (I. i. 87-8).  
 "For this '*would*' changes" (IV. vii. 118).

(b) Intransitive used interchangeably with Transitive.

- "So nightly *toils* the subject of the land" (I. i. 72) = makes the subject to  
 toil.  
 "If with too credent ear you list his songs" (I. iii. 30).  
 "Haste me to know it" (I. v. 39) = make me to go quickly.

(c) Used interchangeably as Adjectives.

- "As hush (silent) as death" (II. ii. 486).

## 4. Abstract words used in a concrete sense.

- "Needful in our loves (i.e. on account of our love)" (I. i. 173).  
 "Your better wisdoms" (I. ii. 15).  
 "You cannot speak of reason" (I. ii. 43), i.e. name a reasonable request.  
 "My necessities are embarked" (I. iii. 1) = needful things.  
 "Between you and your love" (III. ii. 283) = lover.  
 "Tis meet that some more audience than a mother (III. iii. 31) = persons hearing.  
 "With this contagion" (IV. vii. 146) = poisonous drug.

## II. BREVITY AND EMPHASIS.

The desire for brevity will explain many omissions. Notable illustrations are:—

- "Do you consent (*that*) we shall acquaint him with it" (I. i. 172).  
 "Now follows, (*that*) that you know, young Fortinbras" (I. ii. 17).  
 "Give these fellows some means (*of access*) to the king" (IV. vi. 14).

## 1. Omission of the relative.

- "That father (*who was*) lost" (I. ii. 90)  
 "And they (*that are*) in France" (I. iii. 73) } omission of relative and verb  
 "What is't, Ophelia, (*that*) he has said to you" (I. iii. 83).  
 "Even with the vow (*that*) I made to her in marriage" (I. v. 49-50).  
 "Your party in converse, him (*whom*) you would sound" (II. i. 42).  
 "And (*whom*) all we mourn for" (II. ii. 153).  
 "Those ills (*which*) we have" (III. i. 79).  
 "To draw apart the body (*which*) he hath killed" (IV. i. 24).  
 "I have words to speak in thine ear (*that*) which will make thee dumb" (IV. vi. 24-25).  
 "That (*which*) we would do" (IV. vii. 117).  
 "We'll put on those (*who*) shall praise your excellence" (IV. vii. 130).  
 "The faine (*which*) the Frenchman gave you" (IV. vii. 132).  
 "There is a willow (*which*) grows aslant a brook" (IV. vii. 165).  
 "The corse (*which*) they follow" (V. i. 221).

## 2. Omission of the subject.

- "(*He*) sends out arrests" (II. ii. 67).  
 "And now (*it*) remains" (II. ii. 100).  
 "Well be (*it*) with you" (II. ii. 381).  
 "But with a crafty madness, (*he*) keeps aloof" (III. i. 8).  
 "None wed the second, but (*he*) who killed the first" (III. ii. 167).

## 3. Omission of the verb of motion.

- "(*Go*) away, I do beseech you, both (*go*) away" (II. ii. 170).  
 "Shall we (*go*) to the court" (II. ii. 264).  
 "He shall (*go*) with speed to England" (III. i. 167).  
 "Shall (*go*) along with you" (III. iii. 4).  
 "I must (*go*) to England" (III. iv. 200).

Emphasis is denoted.

## 1. In the Double Negative.

- "It is not, *nor* it cannot come to, good" (I. ii. 153).  
 "Nor no matter in the phrase" (II. ii. 442).  
 "Nor 'tis not strange" (III. ii. 187).  
 "Nor did you nothing hear" (III. iv. 134).  
 "Not this, by no means, that I bid you do" (III. iv. 181).

## 2. In double comparatives and superlatives.

- "Come you more nearer" (II. i. 11).  
 "O most best believe it" (II. ii. 123).  
 "Shows itself more richer" (III. ii. 289).  
 "The worse part of it" (III. iv. 157).  
 "More rarer breath" (V. ii. 125).

## 3. In the repetition of the subject.

"He hath not fail'd to pester us with message" (I. ii. 32).  
The subject proper is "Fortinbras" (line 17).

## 4. In the repetition of the object.

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel" (I. iii. 62-63).

## III. WE MAY NOTE ALSO:

## 1. The use of the Nominative Absolute.

The absolute case in Greek is the Genitive; in Latin the Ablative; in Anglo-Saxon, the Dative. Shakespeare in the transition period drops the inflection but retains the idiom. The use of the Dative Absolute in Early English writers explains the frequent use of the Nominative Absolute by Elizabethan writers.

"Yet now, I must confess, *that duty done*" (I. ii. 54).  
"*His greatness weigh'd*, his will is not his own" (I. iii. 17).  
"*The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried*  
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel" (I. iii. 62-63).  
"*The great man* (being) down, you mark his favourite flies" (III. i. 191).  
"*Else no creature seeing*" (III. ii. 240).  
"*No leisure bated*" (V. ii. 29).  
"*The chameleon never known*" (V. ii. 63).  
"*The gentleman willing*" (V. ii. 176).  
"*Things standing thus alone*" (V. ii. 345).

## 2. The use of "His" with a neuter noun, where we should now use "Its."

The neuter possessive form "*its*" is of later date than Shakespeare's time, when it was just beginning to be used. The A.S. possessive form both in the masculine and neuter gender was "*his*."

"Nor any unproportion'd thought *his* act" (I. iii. 60).  
"*Since nature cannot choose his* origin" (I. iv. 26).  
"*The dram of base—to his* own scandal" (I. iv. 38-39).  
"*As level as the cannon to his* blank" (IV. i. 43).  
"*That treason can but peep to what it would,*  
Acts little of *his* will" (IV. iv. 127).  
"*That, as the star moves not but in his* sphere" (IV. vii. 15).  
"*Than settled ago his* angles and *his* woods" (IV. vii. 79).  
"*Sir, this report of his*  
Did Hamlet so envenom with *his* envy" (IV. vii. 101-102).  
"*There's a willow—that shows his* hoar leaves" (IV. vii. 165-166).

## 3. The frequent non-agreement of the verb with the subject. e.g.

(a) A singular verb with a plural nominative.

"For on his choice *depends*  
The safety and health of the whole state" (I. iii. 20-21).  
The double nominative follows the verb, and express one idea.  
"*His* sickness, age, and impotence  
Was falsely borne in hand" (II. ii. 66-67).  
The three nominatives express the state of health of the king of Norway.  
"*Your* fat king, and your lean beggar *is* but variable service" (IV. iii. 24-5).  
The verb is attracted to agree with *service*.  
"*There's* letters sealed" (III. iv. 202).  
"*There's* tricks i' the world" (IV. v. 5).  
"*There is* pauses, that's for thoughts" (IV. v. 163-4).  
"*That's* two of his weapons" (V. ii. 148).

In these instances the subject is yet future, and so a speaker might well make such errors of syntax.

## (b) A plural verb with a singular nominative.

"More than the scope

Of these dilated articles *allow*" (I. ii. 37-38).

"Scope," the subject, is singular. "*Allow*," the verb is attracted to agree with "articles," the nearer noun.

"Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree ;

But *fall*, unshaken, when they mellow be" (III. ii. 177-178).

*Fall* is attracted to agree with "they" the nearer subject.

"The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves *destroy*" (III. ii. 183-184).

The verb is attracted to agree with "*enactures*," the nearest noun.

## (c) Participial Forms.

Bed-rid = bed-ridden (I. ii. 29).

Broke = broken (IV. v. 102).

Deject = dejected (III. i. 153).

Disjoint = disjointed (I. ii. 20).

Eat = eaten (IV. iii. 29).

Forbid = forbidden (I. v. 13).

Forgot = forgotten (III. ii. 127,  
III. iv. 201).

Hoist = hoisted (III. iv. 207).

O'er-took = over-taken (II. i. 58).

Shook = shaken (IV. vii. 32).

Spoke = spoken (I. i. 45).

Well-took = well-taken (II. ii. 83).

Writ = written (I. ii. 27), also (I. ii.  
222, IV. v. 129).

## 4. The use of compound words.

Elizabethan writers freely coined Compound Words, in order to express their meaning, and in doing so did not follow rules which would be now observed. Examples of Compound Words are—

"Demi-natured" (IV. vii. 86).

"Down-gyved" (II. i. 78).

"Fear-surprised" (I. ii. 203).

"Tree-footed" (III. iii. 26).

"Gain-giving" (V. ii. 216).

"Giant-like" (IV. v. 109).

"Heaven-kissing" (III. iv. 59).

"Heavy-headed" (I. iv. 17).

"Hugger-mugger" (IV. v. 75).

"Ill-breeding" (IV. v. 15).

"In-urned" (I. iv. 49).

"Jig-maker" (III. ii. 115).

"Lazar-like" (I. v. 56).

"Liberal-conceited" (V. ii. 163).

"Life-rendering" (IV. v. 134).

"Muddy-mettled" (II. ii. 569).

"Murdering-piece" (IV. v. 86).

"New-hatched" (I. iii. 65).

"New-lighted" (III. iv. 59).

"O'er-crows" (V. ii. 353).

"O'er-leavens" (I. i. 29).

"O'er-sized" (II. ii. 462).

"O'er-teemed" (II. ii. 508).

"Out-face" (V. i. 279).

"Out-herod" (III. ii. 14).

"Peace-parted" (V. i. 239).

"Periwig-pated" (III. ii. 9).

"Pigeon-livered" (II. ii. 580).

"Promise-crammed" (III. ii. 93).

"Re-speaking" (I. ii. 128).

"Rough-hew" (V. ii. 11).

"Self-slaughter" (I. ii. 132).

"Shrill-sounding" (I. i. 151).

"Shriving-time" (V. ii. 47).

"Thought-sick" (III. iv. 51).

"Up-hoarded" (I. i. 136).

"Up-spring" (I. iv. 9).

"Well-took" (II. ii. 83).

"Wonder-wounded" (V. i. 258).

5. Words which have changed either their form or meaning.

Words occurring in *Hamlet* only are marked with an asterisk.

- Abuse = trick, deception (IV vii. 48).  
 Addition = title (I. iv. 20).  
 Anchor (anchorite) = hermit (III. ii. 206).  
 \*Annexment = what is annexed (III. iii. 21).  
 \*Apoplexed = struck with apoplexy (III. iv. 73).  
 Attent = attentive (I. ii. 193).  
 Benetted = ensnared (V. ii. 29).  
 Beteem = permit (I. ii. 141).  
 Bisson = blind or purblind (II. ii. 506).  
 Blank = mark (IV. i. 42).  
 Blanks = makes pale, whitens (III. ii. 207).  
 Bravery = fine show, display (V. ii. 79).  
 Buzzers = whisperers, talebearers (IV. v. 81).  
 \*Blastments = blight (I. iii. 42).  
 Cautel = deceit (I. iii. 15).  
 \*Cease = decease (III. iii. 15).  
 Character = engrave (I. iii. 59).  
 Character = handwriting (IV. vii. 50).  
 Circumstance = circumlocution (I. v. 111).  
 Clepe = call, name (I. iv. 19).  
 \*Climatures = those living under the same climate (I. i. 125).  
 Collection = inference (IV. v. 9).  
 Compulsatory } = compulsory  
 Compulsative } (I. i. 103).  
 Condolement = grief (I. ii. 93).  
 Conceit = conception (II. ii. 554).  
 Confine = limit, boundary (I. i. 155, II. ii. 245).  
 Continent = that which contains, or encloses (IV. iv. 64).  
 \*Contraction = marriage (III. iv. 46).  
 Concernancy = connection, i.e. what does it relate to (V. ii. 124).  
 Credent = believing (I. iii. 30).  
 Cunnings = skill (IV. vii. 154).  
 \*Danskens = Danes (II. i. 7).  
 Despatched = deprived (I. v. 59).  
 Distilment = distillation (I. v. 48).  
 Document = a lesson (IV. v. 165).  
 \*Emulate = emulous (I. i. 88).  
 \*Enactures = resolutions (III. ii. 184).  
 Encompassment = circumvention (II. i. 10).  
 \*Encumbered = folded (I. v. 158).  
 \*Entreatments = favours (I. iii. 122).  
 Espials = spies (III. i. 32).  
 \*Even = fellow (V. i. 23).  
 Excrements = that which grows out of the body, hair (III. iv. 121).  
 Express = expressive (II. ii. 307).  
 Extravagant = wandering (I. i. 154).  
 Fantasy = whim, caprice (IV. iv. 61).  
 Favour = appearance (V. i. 195).  
 Fond = foolish (V. ii. 194).  
 Foredoes = destroys (II. i. 101).  
 Fore-knowing = fore-knowledge (I. i. 134).  
 Fust = to grow mouldy (IV. iv. 39).  
 Hectic = fever (IV. iii. 67).  
 \*Hent = opportunity (III. iii. 88).  
 \*Incorrect = unsubdued (I. ii. 95).  
 Impartment = communication (I. iv. 59).  
 \*Impasted = made into paste (II. ii. 459).  
 Implorators = implorers (I. iii. 129).  
 Imperious = imperial (V. i. 214).  
 \*Imposthume = abscess, tumour (IV. iv. 27).



- Impress = impressment (I. i. 75).  
 Imputation = reputation (V. ii. 143).  
 \*Incorpsed = made one body (IV. vii. 86).  
 Incorporal = incorporeal, immaterial (III. iv. 118).  
 Indifferent = moderately (V. ii. 99).  
 Jointress = joint possessor (I. ii. 9).  
 Jump = just, exactly (I. i. 64) and (V. ii. 376).  
 Luxury = lust (I. v. 67).  
 Majestical = majestic (I. i. 143).  
 Motion = a thrust in fencing (IV. vii. 100).  
 \*Mutine = to mutiny (III. iv. 83).  
 Mutines = mutineers (V. ii. 6).  
 Occurrents = incidents, occurrences (V. ii. 357).  
 Opposites = opponents (V. ii. 62).  
 \*Ordinant = ordaining, overruling (V. ii. 48).  
 \*Polack = Pole (I. i. 63).  
 Plausive = pleasing (I. iv. 90).  
 \*Plurisy = plethora, redundancy of blood (IV. vii. 116).  
 Powers = forces, army (IV. iv. 9).  
 Pressures = impressions (I. v. 84).  
 Prevent = anticipate (II. ii. 296).  
 \*Precurse = precursor (I. i. 121).  
 Prenominate = forenamed (II. i. 43).  
 \*Reconcilement = reconciliation (V. ii. 247).  
 Replication = reply (IV. ii. 13).  
 Romage = bustle, stir (I. i. 107).  
 Round = outspoken, plain (III. i. 181).  
 \*Sanctuarize = be a sanctuary to (IV. vii. 126).  
 Scrimer = fencer (IV. vii. 99).  
 Semblable = likeness (V. ii. 120).  
 Shent = reproached, put to shame (III. ii. 884).  
 \*Skyish = lofty (V. i. 254). (V. ii. 48).  
 Still = ever, always (I. i. 122).  
 Stuck = thrust (IV. vii. 160).  
 \*Suppliance = what supplies or fills up (I. iii. 9).  
 \*Supposal = supposition, opinion (I. ii. 18).  
 \*Suspuration = sigh (I. ii. 79).  
 Takes = infects (I. i. 163).  
 Taxed = accused (I. iv. 18).  
 \*Uncharge = to make no charge against (IV. vii. 66).  
 Uneffectual = ineffectual (I. v. 74).  
 \*Ungored = unstained (V. ii. 250).  
 \*Unimproved = untutored (I. i. 96).  
 Unsure = not safe (IV. iv. 51).  
 Warrantize = warranty, authorization (V. i. 228).  
 \*Woundless = incapable of inflicting a wound, (IV. i. 44).

## GRAMMAR.

**Much** thanks (I. i. 8). An instance of the use of "much" as an ordinary adjective.

**What** we have seen (I. i. 83). What is a relative pronoun, according to Shakespeare's use. It depends upon a verb of speech implied either in "*assail your ears*," or "*story*," i.e. "let us tell you what we have seen," or "our story describing what we have seen."

**Sit** we down (I. i. 34). Sit, the simple form of the subjunctive. May be regarded as an imperative in the first person plural, but the subjunctive is apparent if we supply as "What if we sit down," or "Suppose we sit down."

When **yond** same star (I. i. 36). Yond, a demonstrative pronoun.

**Summons** (I. i. 149). Singular. The derivation is from F. *sémonce*. L. *submoneas* = be thou warned. It is the first word of the legal document.

**Break** we our watch up (I. i. 168). Break, subjunctive, used imperatively.

**Most incorrect** to heaven (I. ii. 95). Incorrect is a participle rather than an adjective = "not corrected," "unsubdued."

**What** (I. ii. 98). Relative (see I. i. 83).

**As any the most vulgar thing to sense** (I. ii. 99) = as anything the most vulgar to sense, i.e. anything most commonly perceived.

**Who** still hath cried (I. ii. 104). The antecedent is "reason" (line 103) personified.

**Till** he that died to-day (I. ii. 105). Till is a preposition, requiring an objective case, i.e. "him."

**Than** that which, dearest father (I. ii. 111). Note the omission of "the." See also "Best safety lies in fear" (I. iii. 43).

**Impart** (I. ii. 112). Used intransitively = impart myself.

**Bend** you to remain (I. ii. 115). "You" = yourself. Reflexive use of the verb.

**Tell** (I. ii. 126). Intransitive = say or speak.

**Truster** (I. ii. 172). *Er* added denotes the agent = one who trusts.

**Followed hard upon** (I. ii. 179). Upon is used adverbially.

**Saw** who? (I. ii. 190). An instance of the neglect of the inflection of *who*. We should use "*whom*."

**In dreadful secrecy** (I. ii. 207). Dreadful is active = inspiring terror.

**Methought** (I. ii. 215) = it seemed to me. *Me* is dative case, and thinks is an impersonal verb from A.S. *thencan*, to seem. A.S. *thencan* is the root of the verb "to think," "to imagine."

**As** it would speak (I. ii. 217). Supply "if" = as if.

**Fear me** not (I. iii. 51). *Me* dative = fear not for me.

**As it is a-making** (I. iii. 119). Making, Gerundial form, verbal noun = in the making.

**Come** your ways (I. iii. 135). Ways is the old A.S. genitive case of "way," used as an adverb.

**And we fools** of nature (I. iv. 54). We = us, is the direct, fools the indirect (factive) object of "*making*."

**Deprive** your sovereignty of reason (I. iv. 73). Deprive = take away. Of reason, attributive to "sovereignty" = to take away your controlling principle of reason.

**Come** (I. v. 109). Infinitive (to come) dependent upon "*needs*."

**I will go pray** (I. v. 116). Pray, infinitive of purpose dependent upon "go" = go to pray. So also, "I will go seek" (II. i. 99).

- By pronouncing of** (I. v. 159). Pronouncing, Gerund as verbal noun.  
**Inquire me** first (II. i. 7). Me dative = inquire for me.  
**Shaking of my arm** (II. i. 90). Shaking, Gerund as verbal noun. So also "waving" (line 91).  
**Between who** (II. ii. 196). Who = whom (see I. ii. 104).  
**Well be with you** (II. ii. 381). Be impersonal: optative subjunctive = be it well with you.  
**Speak me a speech** (II. ii. 434). Me, ethic dative = to please me. Speech, objective of cognate meaning.  
**A-work** (II. ii. 488). Adverb. A is preposition. A-work = at work.  
**In mincing with** (II. ii. 514).  
**You were better** (II. ii. 514). The original idiom is (it) were better (for) you. Shakespeare uses "You" as nominative.  
**Who does me this?** (II. ii. 577). Me dative = who does this to me.  
**That your beauties be** the happy cause (III. i. 39). Example of the subjunctive denoting futurity.  
**The oppressor's wrong** (III. i. 68). Subjective genitive. The wrong done by the oppressor.  
**Soft you now** (III. i. 85). The sense is "hold," "stop talking," "speak softly." The form is "adjectival," *i.e.* soft for *softly*. Can be parsed as verb in the imperative mood = Hush; or as adverb modifying some verb understood.  
**Must give** (III. i. 65). The subject is "*what dreams*" (I. 63).  
**Fair state** (III. i. 150). Fair, an instance of the proleptic use of the adjective. The state is made fair by the rose.  
**There be players** (III. ii. 28). Be is indicative = are (see III. ii. 42).  
**In suffering all** (III. ii. 65). Suffering (see I. v. 175).  
**The whilst this play is playing** (III. ii. 87). Whilst is a noun. While was originally a noun meaning "time."  
**Leave to do** (III. ii. 161). To do. Infinitive as noun, object of leave. Leave = cease (see also III. iv. 66).  
**Vouchsafe me** (III. ii. 280). Me is dative = grant to me.  
**Fear me not** (III. iv. 7). Me is dative = fear not for me.  
**Strongest works** (III. iv. 114). Adverb superlative = most strongly.  
**Heaven hath pleased it so** (III. iv. 173). Pleased, transitive = willed. Heaven = heavenly powers. The implied plural accounts for the plural "their"—"*their* scourge and minister" (line 175).  
**Your worm is your only emperor** (IV. iii. 22). Your is used to appropriate the objects spoken of (worm, emperor) to the person.  
**Shoon** (IV. v. 26) = Shoes. Shoon is the old English plural in "n," as brethren, kine, oxen.  
**Fear our person** (IV. v. 110) = fear for, be anxious about. Person is dative.  
**Deny me right** (IV. v. 190). Me = dative, indirect object of "deny" = deny justice to me. So "You" (IV. vi. 31). I will give you way = I will give a way to you.  
**Be it either which** (IV. vii. 13). Either which = which-one-so-ever-of the two.  
**My sudden and more strange return** (IV. vii. 47) = sudden and more strange than sudden.  
**Can well** (IV. vii. 83). Can in the sense of able = they are skilful.  
**I'll have prepared him** (IV. vii. 159). Him is dative, indirect object of prepared = I will have a chalice made ready for him.  
**Methought** (V. i. 64). Me is dative = it seemed to me.  
**I sat me down** (V. ii. 31). Me is used reflexively.

## ALLUSIONS.

**Adam.** "The Scripture says, *Adam* digged" (V. i. 36).

See Genesis II. 15.

**Æneas.** "'Twas *Æneas*' tale to Dido" (II. ii. 46).

Æneas, the Trojan hero and ancestor of the Romans. On his journey from Greece to Italy he was shipwrecked off the coast of Africa, and was received by Dido, Queen of Carthage.

Æneas' tale, is the story of the fall of Troy, recounted in the Second Book of Virgil's *Æneid*. Æneas is represented in that book as relating to Dido the tale of the capture and destruction of Troy.

**Alexander.** "The noble dust of *Alexander*" (V. i. 204-5).

Alexander the Great, son of Philip, King of Macedon. His conquests over the Persians and in Asia Minor gained for him the name of *Great*. Born B.C. 356; died B.C. 323.

**Brutus.** "I did enact Julius Cesar; I was killed i' the Capitol; *Brutus* killed me" (III. ii. 102-3).

Marcus Junius Brutus, the chief of the conspirators against Cesar. He was a descendant of the famous Brutus who headed the people against the Tarquins, destroyed kingly power, and established the Roman republic. Brutus, with Cassius and other conspirators, was defeated at Philippi by Antony and Octavius, and perished in the battle.

**Cain.** "As if it were *Cain's* jawbone that did the first murder" (V. i. 77).

See Genesis IV., also note on the line (p. 149).

**Cyclops.** "And never did the *Cyclop's* hammers fall—

On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne" (II. ii. 489, 490).

Cyclopes, a race of one-eyed monsters (the name signifies creatures with round or circular eyes) living in Sicily. Polyphemus was the chief. They were regarded as the assistants of Vulcan, who was supposed to have his workshop under Mount Ætna. As the assistants of Vulcan they made the metal armour and ornaments for gods and heroes.

**Damon.** "For thou dost know, O *Damon*, dear" (III. ii. 265).

Hamlet styles Horatio his "Damon"; the allusion is to the well known friendship of Damon and Phintias (generally called Pythias), which has become proverbial for disinterestedness and close friendship.

**Dido.** "'Twas *Æneas*' tale to *Dido*" (II. ii. 446) (see *Æneas*).

Dido, queen and founder of Carthage. She received Æneas when shipwrecked off the coast of Africa. When Æneas sailed away and deserted her, Dido burned herself on a funeral pyre.

**Fortune.** "Out, out, thou strumpet, *Fortune*! all you gods,

In general synod, take away her power;

Break all the spokes and felloes from her wheel,

And bowl the round knave down the hill of heaven,

As low as to the fiends" (II. ii. 493-497).

Fortune, the goddess of fortune. She is represented in mythology under different attributes.

(1) With a rudder, guiding and conducting the affairs of the world.

(2) With a wheel, as representing the changes of fortune.

(3) With a ball as representing the varying unsteadiness of fortune.

(4) As blind, representing the blind chance displayed in the bestowal of her favours.

**Hecate.** "With *Hecate's* ban thrice blasted, thrice infected" (III. ii. 242).

Hecate, a mysterious divinity represented as a threefold goddess with three bodies or three heads. She is said to have been—

(1) Selene or Luna in heaven.

(2) Artemis or Diana on earth.

(3) Persephone or Proserpina in the lower world.

From being an infernal deity she came to be regarded as a spectral being, who sent at night all kinds of demons and phantoms from the lower world, and who taught sorcery and witchcraft.

Shakespeare here represents her as the compounder and dispenser of poisons.

**Hecuba.** "Come to *Hecuba*" (II. ii. 501).

"What's *Hecuba* to him or he to *Hecuba*" (II. ii. 560).

*Hecuba* was the wife of Priam, King of Troy. Priam was slain by Pyrrhus before her eyes.

**Hercules.** "Than I to *Hercules*" (I. ii. 153).

*Hercules*, also known as *Alcides* and *Herakles*, was the son of Zeus (Jupiter) and *Alcmene*. He was famous for his great strength and exploits. His twelve labours or tasks accomplished in the service of Eurystheus are well known. After his death he was taken to Olympus and married to Hebe.

"*Hercules*, and his load too" (II. ii. 362).

This is an allusion to *Hercules* bearing the weight of heaven instead of Atlas, while Atlas went to fetch the golden apples.

"Let *Hercules* himself do what he may" (V. i. 292).

A reference to the great strength of the hero. (See Nemæan lion).

**Herod.** "It out-herods Herod" (III. ii. 14).

Herod the Great, king of Judæa, was notorious for cruelty and tyranny. Herod was one of the principal characters in the old mystery plays, and was represented as a furious tyrant.

**Hymen.** "Since love our hearts, and *Hymen* did our hands

Unite commutual in most sacred bands" (III. ii. 146-147).

*Hymen*. The god of marriage.

**Hyperion.** (1) *Hyperion* to a satyr (I. ii. 140).

(2) *Hyperion's* curls (III. iv. 56).

*Hyperion* was a Titan, and the father of *Helios*, the sun. *Helios* is often termed the sun.

The classical accent is on the third syllable Hy-per-i-'on. Shakespeare places the accent on the second syllable.

The references are, however, to Apollo the sun-god, regarded as the type of manly beauty. Hamlet describes his father as a model of manly grace like *Hyperion*; his uncle is as a Satyr compared with him.

**Hyrcanian beast.** "The rugged Pyrrhus, like the *Hyrcanian* beast" (II. ii. 450).

*Hyrcania* was a province of the ancient Persian Empire on the south and south-east shores of the Caspian or Hyrcanian Sea.

The *Hyrcanian* beast is the tiger, and Pyrrhus, in his ruthless slaughter of the hapless Trojans, is likened to the tiger in its thirst for blood.

**Ilium.** "Then senseless *Ilium*

Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top

Stoops to his base" (II. ii. 474-476).

*Ilium* is a name of the famous city of Troy. It is so called from its mythical founder Ius, son of Tros. The city was called Ilium after the son Ius, and Troja after the father Tros.

**Jephthah.** "O *Jephthah*, Judge of Israel—what a treasure hadst thou."

"One fair daughter and no more

The which he loved passing well" (II. ii. 403-408).

*Jephthah*. Judge of Israel, who delivered the Israelites from the Ammonite oppression. The allusion is to the sacrifice of his daughter.

Jephthah had vowed to sacrifice to Jehovah, the first that came out of his house to meet him on his return, should he be victorious over the Ammonites. His only daughter met him to hail her father with timbrels and dances.

Hamlet makes the comparison thus:—

Polonius is Jephthah.

Ophelia, daughter of Polonius, is Jephthah's daughter.

Polonius accepts the comparison. "*If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter I love passing well.*"

**Jove** (1) "This realm dismantled was  
Of *Jove* himself; and now reigns here  
A very, very—peacock" (III. ii. 266-268).

(2) "The front of *Jove* himself" (III. iv. 56).

*Jove* or *Jupiter*, the King of the Gods.

Hamlet likens his father to *Jupiter*—his uncle to a mere showy peacock.

**Julius Cæsar.** (1) "A little ere the mightiest *Julius* fell" (I. i. 114).

*Julius Cæsar*, the famous Roman general, who shattered the aristocratic senatorial party in Rome, headed by *Pompey*, and became virtual master of the state.

He was assassinated by *Marcus Junius Brutus* and other conspirators. *Horatio* is here referring to the prodigies that are said to have occurred just previous to the death of *Cæsar*.

(2) "I did enact *Julius Cæsar*; I was killed i' the Capitol; *Brutus* killed me" (III. ii. 102-3).

Polonius is relating how he had once played the part of *Julius Cæsar* in a play of that name. The reference is to the assassination of *Cæsar*.

**Lethe.** "And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed,

That rots itself in ease on *Lethe* wharf" (I. v. 32-3).

A river of the lower world of which the souls of the departed drank, and thus forgot all they had said and done in the upper world. *Lethe* has become the personification of oblivion.

**Mars.** "An eye like *Mars*" (III. iv. 57).

*Mars*. The Roman god of war.

Hamlet gives his father a martial, warlike appearance in thus likening him to the god of war.

**Mercury.** "A station like the herald *Mercury*" (III. iv. 58).

*Mercury*. The herald of the Gods, and as such regarded as the god of eloquence. The principal attributes of *Mercury* are: (1) a travelling hat with a broad brim; (2) the herald's staff; (3) the sandals, golden and provided with wings at the ankles, which carried the god across land and sea with the rapidity of the wind.

Station here means "attitude." Hamlet represents his father as having the graceful pose of the god *Mercury*.

**Nemean lion.** "As hardy as the *Nemean* lion's nerve" (I. iv. 83).

The *Nemean* lion inhabited the valley of *Nemæa* in *Argolis*. *Eurystheus* ordered *Hercules* to slay this monster as one of his twelve labours. After using his club and arrows in vain against the lion, *Hercules* strangled it with his own hands.

**Neptune.** (1) "And the moist star,  
Upon whose influence *Neptune's* empire stands" (I. i. 118-119).

*Neptune* was the god of the sea, so *Neptune's* empire means the ocean.

The allusion is to the moon (*the moist star*), whose attraction causes the tides.

(2) "*Neptune's salt wash*" (III. ii. 143).

A term for the ocean.

"Let not ever

**Nero.**

The soul of *Nero* enter this firm bosom" (III. ii. 379-380).

*Nero*, the infamous Roman emperor, a monster of vice and cruelty. He gained the imperial purple through the intrigues of his mother *Agrippina*, who exercised great influence and authority during the early years of his reign. *Nero*, becoming weary of his mother's influence, and urged by his mistress *Poppaea* caused *Agrippina* to be assassinated. The allusion in the quotation is to the murder of the mother, *Agrippina*, by the son, *Nero*, and *Hamlet* prays lest his wrath at his own father's murder should lead him to follow *Nero's* example and put the queen, his mother, to death.

**Niobe.** "Like *Niobe*, all tears" (I. ii. 149).

*Niobe* is the beau-ideal of grief. She is said to have been the mother of six sons and six daughters, and proud of the number of her children, boasted herself as superior to *Leto* or *Latoona*, the mother of *Apollo* and *Artemis* (*Diana*). *Apollo* and *Artemis*, indignant at her presumption, slew all her children with their arrows. In her excessive grief she desired *Zeus* (*Jupiter*) to turn her into stone. The god complied with her request, and metamorphosed her into stone, which still shed tears in sorrow for the slain children.

*Hamlet* is describing the grief put on by his mother for the death of his father.

**Olympus.**

"Or the skyish head

Of blue *Olympus*" (V. i. 254-255).

*Olympus*. The range of mountains separating *Thessaly* from *Macedonia*, and forming the northern boundary of ancient Greece proper. In mythology *Olympus* was the chief seat of the gods of whom *Zeus* was the head. *Homer* describes the gods as having their palaces on the summit of *Olympus*. The later poets transfer the real abode of the gods from the summit of *Olympus* to the vault of heaven (i.e. the sky) itself.

In the war between the *Titans* and the gods, the *Titans* are said to have piled *Pelion* on the top of *Ossa*, and both on the lower slopes of *Olympus* to scale the summit of *Olympus* itself, the abode of the gods.

**Ossa.** "Make *Ossa* like a wart" (V. i. 284) (see *Olympus*).

*Ossa*. A celebrated mountain in *Thessaly*, connected with *Pelion* on the S.E., and divided from *Olympus* on the N.W. by the Vale of *Tempe*.

**Pelion.** "To o'ertop old *Pelion*" (V. i. 254) (see *Olympus*).

*Pelion*. A lofty range of mountains in *Thessaly*. Near the summit was the cave of the centaur *Chiron*. On *Pelion* also the timber was felled, with which the ship *Argo* was built.

**Phœbus.** "Full thirty times hath *Phœbus* cart gone round" (III. ii. 142).

*Phœbus*, the god of the sun, supposed to drive the chariot of the sun from east to west. Thirty times would indicate a full month.

**Plautus.** "Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor *Plautus* too light" (II. ii. 401).

*Plautus* was the most celebrated comic poet of Rome. He is said to have written 130 comedies, of which twenty are extant. *Polonius* refers to him as the greatest authority on comedy.

**Priam.** "Old grandsire *Priam*" (II. ii. 464).

Priam was the King of Troy. At the capture of the city he was slain by Pyrrhus, son of Achilles. The account of his death is found in Virgil's *Æneid* Book II. 526-558.

**Pyrrhus.** "The rugged *Pyrrhus* like the Hyrcanian beast (II. ii. 452).

"With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish *Pyrrhus*" (II. ii. 463).

Pyrrhus or Neoptolemus was the son of Achilles. He was one of the Grecian heroes concealed in the wooden horse. He distinguished himself in the capture of Troy, and was ruthless in the slaughter of the Trojans. The aged Priam is said to have been slain by him at the sacred hearth of Zeus.

**Roscius.** "When *Roscius* was an actor in Rome" (II. ii. 392).

The most celebrated actor in Rome. He was considered to have reached such perfection in his profession that it became the fashion to call any one particularly distinguished in the art by the name of Roscius. (B.C. 134-61).

**Saint Patrick.** "Yes by *Saint Patrick*, but there is *Horatio*" (I. v. 120).

Saint Patrick. The tutelary saint of Ireland. He is said to have cleared Ireland of vermin. St. Patrick's day is March 17th.

**Saint Valentine.** "To-morrow is *Saint Valentine's day*" (IV. v. 46).

A Roman priest, who befriended the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II., and was in consequence arrested, beaten with clubs, and finally beheaded (February 14th, A.D. 270). This day is now kept as the lovers' day, for which no reason can be given, save that it is in the early spring-time when the birds pair.

**Seneca.** "*Seneca* cannot be too heavy, nor *Plautus* too light." (II. ii. 401).

The famous Roman philosopher, tutor of the Emperor Nero, and his chief adviser during the early part of the reign. He was put to death by Nero A.D. 65. He was the author of ten tragedies.

Polonius in descending on the abilities of the actors, mentions Seneca as the great authority on the tragic drama.

**Tellus.** "*Tellus*' orb'd ground" (III. ii. 143).

Tellus, Gaea or Ge, the personification of the earth. At Rome the earth was worshipped under the name of Tellus.

**Termagant.** "I have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing *Termagant*" (III. ii. 12-13).

Termagant was an imaginary being supposed by the Crusaders to have been one of the Saracen deities. It was a character frequently represented in the mystery plays, and was conspicuously a ranting part. In these plays, the degree of rant was the measure of the wickedness portrayed.

**The Capitol.** "I did enact *Julius Cæsar*; I was killed i' the *Capitol*, Brutus killed me" (III. ii. 102-3).

The Capitol was the citadel of Rome, situated on the Capitoline hill. Shakespeare, both in this play and in the play of *Julius Cæsar*, represents Cæsar as being assassinated in the Capitol. His death actually occurred in the Curia or Senate house.

**Vulcan.** "And my imaginations are as foul

As *Vulcan's* stithy" (III. ii. 83).

Vulcan. The Roman god of fire. He is said to have had his workshop under Mount *Ætna*, in Sicily. The Cyclopes were his workmen (see Cyclops).

Vulcan's stithy = Vulcan's forge, or blacksmith's shop.



## PLAYS ON WORDS.

**Kin and Kind** "*A little more than kin and less than kind*" (I. ii. 45).

- (1) *Kin* = of the same race; (2) *Kind* = of the same nature, or, kindly, well disposed.

A play on words variously explained—

- (1) "*More than kin*," i.e. more than three letters. "*Less than kind*," less than four.
- (2) More than *cousin*, and less than *son* to the king.
- (3) More than thy kinsman (Hamlet is now *stepson* to the king), and less than *kind* to thee, for I hate thee for thy marriage to my mother.
- (4) Marriage to his mother had made the king Hamlet's kinsman, yet his nature was unworthy of Hamlet's race, his *kind*.

**Sun** } "*Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun*" (I. ii. 67).  
**Son** } There may be a play of words between *sun* and *son* (see I. ii. 64).  
 You call me your *son*, but there is too much of this *sonship*,  
 I ought to be king, not merely regarded as your son and heir to the throne.

**Tender** "*Tender yourself more dearly:*  
*Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,*  
*Running it thus,—you'll tender me a fool*" (I. iii. 107-109).

- (1) *Tender* = regard, consider; (2) *tender* = offer.

**Fashion** Oph. "*My lord, he hath importuned me with love,*  
*In honourable fashion.*

Pol. "*Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to*" (I. iii. 110-2).

- (1) *Fashion* = manner; (2) *fashion* = a passing fancy.

**Attended** "*I am most dreadfully attended*" (II. ii. 268).

- (1) *Attended* = filled with miserable thoughts; (2) *attended* = followed and watched in a most annoying manner.

**Abridgment** "*For look, my abridgment comes*" (II. ii. 420).

- (1) *Abridgment* = shortening, i.e. the entrance of the actors cuts short the conversation with Polonius; (2) *abridgment*, a technical term for a dramatic performance, so-called from its abridging or passing over the time.

**Brute** } Pol. "*I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed in the Capitol;*  
*Brutus killed me.*" (III. ii. 102-3).

**Capitol** } Ham. "*It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.*"  
 (1) *Brute*. Cæsar's last words when Brutus stabbed him were "*Et tu Brute*" = and "thou Brutus" to whom I have shewn such kindness; (2) *brute*, i.e. acting like a brute beast.

- (1) **Capitol** = the citadel of Rome; (2) *capital* = excellent, i.e. such a rare good calf.

**Purgation** "*For me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler*" (III. ii. 290-291).

- (1) *Purgation* = cleansing, healing; (2) *purgation* = to clear oneself on oath.

**Fret** "*Though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me*" (III. ii. 355).  
 (1) *Fret* = annoy; (2) *fret* = the lines or ridges on a guitar denoting stops.

**Act** "*Ah me, what act*  
*That roars so loud, and thunders in the index*" (III. iv. 51-52).  
 (1) *Act* = a deed; (2) *act* = an act in a play or drama.

**Packing** "*This man shall set me packing*" (III. iv. 211).  
 (1) *Packing* = set off at once; (2) *packing* = plotting.

**Politic** "*A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him*" (IV. iii. 21).  
 (1) *Politic* = discussing matters of policy; (2) *politic* = feasting on a politician (Polonius).

**Fine** "*Is this the fine of his fines*" (V. i. 105).  
 (1) *Fine* = end; (2) *fine* = forfeit.

**Assurance** "*They are sheep and calves which seek assurance in that*" (V. i. 115).  
 (1) *Assurance* = perfect security; (2) *assurance* = conveyance by deed.

**Box** "*The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box*" (V. i. 109-110).  
 (1) *Box* = grave; (2) *box* = lawyer's box to hold deeds.

**Lie** "*I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in it, etc.*" (V. i. 121-122).  
 (1) *Lie* = to rest in; (2) *lie* = to say what is not the truth.

**Quick** Ham. "*'Tis for the dead and not the quick; therefore, thou liest.*"  
 Clown. "*'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you*" (V. i. 126-129).

(1) *Quick* = living, not dead; (2) *quick* = speedy, swift.  
 See also "*To be buried quick with her*" (V. i. 280).

**Living** "*This grave shall have a living monument*" (V. i. 298).  
 (1) *Living* = enduring, lasting; (2) *living*, in the living sacrifice of Hamlet, whose death is intended by the king, who is the speaker.

**Answer** Osric "*And it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.*"  
 Ham. "*How if I answer, no?*" (V. ii. 168-171).

(1) *Answer* = an encounter, meeting in combat; (2) *answer* = reply.

**Foil** Ham. "*Give us the foils; come on.*"  
 Laer. "*Come, one for me.*"  
 Ham. "*I'll be your foil, Laertes*" (V. ii. 254-255).

(1) *Foil*, a weapon; (2) *foil*, a set off (see p. 188).

**Union** "*Drink off this portion: Is the union here?*"  
 Follow my mother (V. ii. 326-327).  
 (1) *Union* = pearl; (2) *Union* = marriage union. Hamlet bids his uncle drink the poison and die, and thus join his mother who had drunk from the same cup.

## QUOTATIONS FROM OTHER PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE ILLUSTRATIVE OF WORDS USED IN AN UNUSUAL SENSE.

(The Editor would acknowledge his obligation to the Clarendon Press Edition).

- Fantasy** (I. i. 28) = imagination.  
 "Art thou alive, or is it *fantasy*,  
 That plays upon our eyesight" (2 Hen. IV., V. iv. 134-5).
- Approve** (I. i. 29) = to prove, to justify.  
 "Approve it with a text" (M. of V., III. ii. 79).
- Jump** (I. i. 65) = exactly.  
 "And bring him *jump*, where he may Cassio find" (Oth., II. iii. 392).
- Scope** (I. i. 68) = room to move in, range.  
 "And as you answer, I do know the *scope*,  
 And warrant limited unto my tongue" (K. John, V. ii. 122-3).
- Subject** (I. i. 72) = Subjects, people under the rule of a monarch.  
 "The greater file of the subject held the duke to be wise"  
 (M. for M., III. ii. 145).
- Impress** (I. i. 75) = impressment, enforced public service.  
 "Ingress'd by swift *impress*" (A. and C., III. vii. 37).
- Competent** (I. i. 90) = sufficient, adequate.  
 "A very *competent* injury" (Twelfth Night, III. iv. 270).
- Stomach** (I. i. 100) = courage.  
 "That he which hath no *stomach* to this fight,  
 Let him depart" (Hen. V., IV. iii. 35).
- Sort** (I. i. 109) = agree, be in accordance with.  
 "I am glad that all things *sort* so well" (Much Ado, V. iv. 7).
- Confine** (I. i. 155) = district to which one is limited.  
 "Here in these *confines* silly have I lurked" (Rich. III., IV. iv. 3).
- Takes** (I. i. 163) = infects (particularly of the malignant influence of superhuman powers).  
 "He blasts the tree, and *takes* the cattle" (Merry Wives, IV. iv. 32).
- Defeat** (I. ii. 10) = disfigure.  
 "*Defeat* thy favour with an usurped beard" (Oth., I. iii. 346).
- Dole** (I. ii. 13) = sorrow, grief.  
 "Making such pitiful *dole* over them" (As You Like It, I. ii. 139).
- Laboursome** (I. ii. 59) = laborious, requiring pains and industry.  
 "Your *laboursome* and dainty trims" (Cymb., III. iv. 167).
- Nighted** (I. ii. 68) = dark as night.  
 "To despatch his *nighted* life" (Lear, IV. v. 13).
- Vail** (I. ii. 70) = to lower, to let fall.  
 "*Vailing* her high top lower than her ribs" (M. of V., I. i. 28).
- Unschool'd** (I. ii. 97) = uneducated.  
 "An unlessoned girl, *unschool'd*, unpractised" (M. of V., III. ii. 160).

**Resolve** (I. ii. 130) = dissolve, melt.

"His passion *resolved* my reason into tears" (Compl. 296).

**Merely** (I. ii. 137) = absolutely.

"We are *merely* cheated of our lives by drunkards" (Temp., I. i. 59).

**Season** (1) (I. ii. 192) = to qualify, to temper.

"When mercy *seasons* justice" (M. of V., IV. i. 197).

(2) (I. iii. 81) = to mature, ripen, prepare.

"How many things by *season* *season'd* are" (M. of V., V. i. 107).

**Convoy** (I. iii. 3) = means of transporting.

"To which place we have convenient *convoy*" (All's Well, IV. iv. 10).

**Cautel** (I. iii. 15) = deceit, falseness.

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter, applied to *cautels*"

(A Lover's Complaint, 303).

**Sit** (I. iii. 56). Used of the wind = to have a direction.

"The wind *sits* fair to go to Ireland" (Rich. II., II. i. 3).

**Husbandry** (I. iii. 77) = economy, thrift.

"There's *husbandry* in heaven:

Their candles are all out" (Macbeth, II. i. 4).

**Tax** (I. iv. 18) = to blame, to censure.

"You *tax* Signior Benediot too much" (Much Ado, I. i. 46).

**Plausible** (I. iv. 30) = plausible,

"A very *plausible* invention" (All's Well, IV. i. 29).

**Removed** (I. iv. 61) = remote, retired, sequestered.

"Visited that *removed* house" (Winter's Tale, V. ii. 116).

**Saws** (I. v. 84) = sayings, maxims.

"Now I find thy *saw* of might" (As You Like It, III. v. 52).

**Circumstance** (I. v. 111) = circumlocution.

"To wind about my love with *circumstance*" (M. of V., I. i. 154).

**Keep** (II. i. 8) = to dwell, to live.

"This habitation where thou *keepst*" (Measure for Measure, I. iii. 10).

**Put on** (II. i. 19) = to impose, to attribute.

"When first they *put* the name of King *upon* me" (Macb., III. i. 25).

**Quaintly** (II. i. 31) = neatly, skilfully.

"This vile, unless it may be *quaintly* ordered" (M. of V., II. iv. 6).

**Taints** (II. i. 32) = defects, blemishes.

"The *taints* and blames I laid upon myself" (Macb., IV. iii. 124).

**Indirection** (II. i. 64) = indirect cause or method.

"To wring

From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash,

By any *indirection*" (J. Caesar, IV. iii. 75).

**Unbraced** (II. i. 76) = unfastened, unbuttoned.

"To walk *unbraced*, and suck up the humours

Of the dank morning" (J. Caesar, II. ii. 232).

**Quote** (II. i. 110) = to note, to observe, to examine.

"Note how she *quotes* the leaves" (Tit., IV. i. 50).

**Proper** (II. i. 112) = peculiar to, belonging to a particular person or state.

"Conceptions only *proper* to myself" (J. Caesar, I. ii. 41).

**Remembrance** (II. ii. 26) = a token by which one is kept in memory, a keepsake.

"Take some *remembrance* of us" (M. of V., IV. i. 142).

**Admittance** (II. ii. 51) = permission to enter, reception.

"Crave *admittance* to your majesty" (Hen. V., II. iv. 66).

**Bear in hand** (II. ii. 67) = to deceive with false pretences.

"She *bears* me fair *in hand*" (Taming of the Shrew, IV. ii. 3).

**Pass** (II. ii. 77) = passage.

"Charming the narrow seas

To give you gentle *pass*" (Hen. V., II. Chor. 39).

**Expostulate** (II. ii. 86) = to discuss.

"Stay not to *expostulate*, make speed" (III. Hen. VI., II. v. 135).

**Wit** (II. ii. 90) = understanding, judgment, intelligence, wisdom.

"Few of any *wit* in such matters" (Measure for Measure, II. i. 233).

**Perpend** (II. ii. 105) = to consider.

Schmidt remarks that this word is "used only by Pistol, Polonius, and the clowns."

"Learn of the wise, and *perpend*" (As You Like It, III. ii. 69).

**Round** (II. ii. 140) = plain spoken, direct, honest.

"I will a *round* unvarnished tale deliver" (Oth., I. iii. 90).

**Bespeak** (II. ii. 141) = to speak to, to address.

"I *bespoke* you fair, and hurt you not" (Twelfth Night, V. i. 192).

**Board** (II. ii. 171) = to address, to accost.

"He would never have *accosted* me in this fury" (Merry Wives, II. i. 92).

**Aiery** (II. ii. 340) = the brood of an eagle, an eagle's nest.

"Your *aiery* buildeth in our *aiery's* nest" (R. III., I. iii. 270).

**Quality** (III. ii. 348) = profession.

"What is thy name? I know thy *quality*" (Hen. V., III. vi. 146).

**Tarre** (II. ii. 354) = to set on (dogs).

"Pride alone

Must *tarre* the mastiffs on" (T. and C., I. iii. 392).

**Argument** (II. ii. 356) = a dramatic plot.

"The *argument* shall be thy running away" (I. Hen. IV., II. iv. 310).

**Passionate** (II. ii. 431) = expressing great emotion.

"She is sad and *passionate* at your highness tent" (K. John, II. i. 544).

**The general** (II. ii. 437) = the people, the public.

"I know no personal cause to spurn at him, but for the *general*" (J. C., II. i. 12).

**Conceit** (II. ii. 554) = conception, idea in the mind.

"You have a noble and true *conceit* of godlike amity" (M. of V., III. iv. 2).

**Blench** (II. ii. 601) = to start back, to flinch.

"There can be no evasion

To *blench* from this and to stand firm by honour" (T. and C., II. ii. 68).

**Abuse** (II. ii. 608) = to deceive.

"Some enchanted trifle to *abuse* me" (Temp. V. i. 112).

Closely (III. i. 29)=secretly.

"Meaning to keep her *closely* at my cell" (R. and J., V. iii. 255).

Affront (III. i. 31)=to meet, to encounter.

"Unless another,

As like as Hermione as is her picture

*Affront* his eye" (Winter's Tale, V. i. 75).

Espial (II. i. 32)=a spy.

"The prince's *espials* have informed me" (I. Hen. VI., I. iv. 8).

Wildness (III. i. 40)=madness.

"Put thyself

Into a haviour of less fear, ere *wildness*

Vanquish my staidier senses" (Cymb., III. iv. 8-10).

Respect (III. i. 65)=consideration.

"I would have dashed all other *respects*" (Much Ado, II. iii. 176).

Variable (III. i. 170)=various, different.

"I never heard a passion so confused,

So strange, outrageous, and so *variable*" (M. of V., II. viii. 12-13).

From (III. ii. 20)=otherwise than, differently to, contrary to.

"Quite *from* the main opinion he held once" (J. C., II. i. 196).

Barren (III. ii. 40)=dull, foolish.

"The shallowest thickskin of that *barren* sort" (M. N. D., III. ii. 13).

Thrift (III. ii. 61)=profit, gain.

"My bargains and my well-won *thrift*" (M. of V., I. iii. 51).

Seeming (III. ii. 86)=appearance.

"My false *seeming*" (Measure for Measure, II. iv. 15).

Idle (III. ii. 89)=foolish, absurd, crazy.

"A foolish, *idle* boy" (All's Well, IV. iii. 242).

Cheer (III. ii. 151)=cheerfulness.

"I have not that alacrity of spirit

Nor *cheer* of mind" (Rich., III., V. iii. 74).

Operant (III. ii. 161)=active.

"With thy most *operant* poison" (Timon, IV. iii. 25).

Instances (III. ii. 169)=cause, motive.

"Gave thee no *instance* why thou shouldst do treason" (Hen. V., II.

ii. 119).

Cry (III. ii. 262)=a pack of hounds, a company.

"Yon common *cry* of curs" (Cor., III. iii. 120).

Shent (III. ii. 384)=blamed, reproached.

"I am *shent* for speaking to you" (Twelfth Night, IV. vii. 112).

Gulf (III. iii. 16)=a whirlpool.

"As water to the sucking of a *gulf*" (Hen. V., II. iv. 10).

Massy (III. iii. 17)=bulky, massive.

"Your swords are now too *massy* for your strength" (Temp., III. iii. 37).

Rest (III. iii. 64)=to remain.

"Let it *rest* where it began at first" (I. Hen. VI., IV. i. 121).

**Sense** (III. iv. 38)=feeling.

"Spirit of *sense*

As hard as the palm of ploughman" (T. and C., I. i. 58).

**Station** (III. iv. 58)=act or mode of standing.

"Her motion and her *station* are as one" (A. and C., III. iii. 22).

**Conceit** (III. iv. 114)=conception, imagination.

"You have a noble and true *conceit* of godlike amity"

(M. of V., III. iv. 2).

**Excrement** (III. iv. 121)=hair, beard.

"Assume but valour's *excrement*" (M. of V., III. ii. 87).

**Packing** (III. iv. 211)=plotting.

"Here's *packing*" (Taming of the Shrew, V. i. 121).

**Blank** (IV. i. 42)=mark.

"Out of the *blank*

And level of my brain" (Winter's Tale, II. iii. 5).

**Countenance** (IV. ii. 15)=authority, credit, favour.

"Abuse the *countenance* of the king" (2 Hen. IV., IV. ii. 13).

**Nose** (IV. iii. 37)=to smell.

"To *nose* the offence" (Cor. V. i. 28).

**Power** (IV. iv. 8)=a force, a body of troops.

"Never such a *power* was levied" (K. John, IV. ii. 210).

**Unsure** (IV. iv. 5)=unsafe, not secure.

"A habitation giddy and *unsure*" (2 Hen. IV., I. iii. 89).

**Continent** (IV. iv. 64)=that which contains or encloses.

"Heart, once be stronger than thy *continent*" (A. and C. IV., iv. 40).

**Remove** (IV. v. 72)=removal, departure.

"Our quick *remove* from hence" (A. and C., I. ii. 203).

**Counter** (IV. v. 101)=the wrong way (a hunting term).

"A hound that runs *counter*" (Comedy of Errors, IV. ii. 39).

**Appointment** (IV. vi. 16)=equipment.

"In best *appointment* all our regiments" (K. John, II. i. 296).

**Character** (IV. vii. 50)=handwriting.

"This is not my writing

Though much like the *character*" (Twelfth Night, V. i. 354).

**Practice** (IV. vii. 66)=stratagem, plot.

"Sworn unto the *practices* of France" (Hen. V., II. ii. 90).

**Siege** (IV. vii. 75)=seat, place, rank.

"Upon the very *siege* of justice" (M. for M., IV. ii. 101).

**Forgery** (IV. vii. 88)=invention, imagination.

"These are the *forgeries* of love" (M.N.D., II. i. 81).

**Motion** (IV. vii. 100)=an attack or thrust in fencing.

"He gives me the stuck in, with such a mortal *motion*"

(Twelfth Night, III. iv. 304)

**Mortal** (IV. vii. 141)=deadly, fatal.

"This news is *mortal* to the queen" (Winter's Tale, III. ii. 149).

**Trick** (IV. vii. 186) = a particular habit.

"It was always yet the *trick* of our English nation "  
(2 Hen. IV., I. ii. 240).

**Stoop** (V. i. 60) = a drinking vessel.

"Marian, I say! A *stoop* of wine " (Twelfth Night, II. iii. 14).

**Mazzard** (V. i. 89) = the head.

"I'll knock thee o'er the *mazzard* " (Oth. II. iii. 155).

**Absolute** (V. i. 137) = positive.

"You are too *absolute* " (Cor. III. ii. 29).

**Picked** (V. i. 140) = refined.

"He is too *picked*, too spruce, too affected " (L. L. L., V. i. 14).

**Flaw** (V. i. 217) = a gust of wind.

"A great sea-mark, standing every *flaw* " (Cor., V. iii. 74).

**Estate** (V. i. 222) = rank, dignity.

"O that *estates*, degrees, and offices " (M. of V., II. ix. 41).

**Mutines** (V. ii. 6) = a rebel, a mutineer.

"Do like the *mutines* in Jerusalem " (K. John, II. i. 378).

**Bugs** (V. ii. 22) = bug bear.

"The *bug* that you would fight me with " (Winter's Tale, III. ii. 93).

**Statists** (V. ii. 33) = a statesman, a politician.

"*Statist* though I am none " (Cymb., II. iv. 16).

**Model** (V. ii. 50) = a copy, an image.

"O England, *model* to thy inward greatness " (Hen. V., II., Cor. 16).

**Writ** (V. ii. 51) = writing.

"Let's see the devil's *writ* " (2 Hen. VI., I. iv. 60).

**Opposite** (V. ii. 62) = adversary, opponent.

"Your *opposite* (Twelfth Night, III. ii. 68).

**Bravery** (V. ii. 79) = splendour, finery.

"His *bravery* is not of my cost " (As You Like It, II. vii. 80).

**Absolute** (V. ii. 109) = highly accomplished, perfect.

"Thou would'st make an *absolute* courtier " (Merry Wives, III. iii. 66)

**Semblable** (V. ii. 120) = resembling, similar, equal.

"His *semblable*, yea, himself, Timon disdains " (Timon, IV. iii. 22).

**Trace** (V. ii. 121) = to follow.

"The search so slow, that could not *trace* them " (Cymb., I. i. 65).

**Napkin** (V. ii. 288) = handkerchief.

"And to that youth he sends this bloody *napkin* "  
(As You Like It, IV. iii. 94).

**Havoc** (V. ii. 364) = indiscriminate slaughter.

"Ory "*Havoc*," and let slip the dogs of war " (J. C., III. i. 273).



## GLOSSARY.

*The Editors would acknowledge their obligation to Skeat's Etymological Dictionary.*  
 A.S. = Anglo-Saxon. D. = Danish. Dut. = Dutch. F. = French. Gk. = Greek.  
 Ger. = German. I. = Irish. Ic. = Icelandic. It. = Italian. L. = Latin.  
 M.E. = Middle English. O. = Old. O.F. = Old French. Sw. = Swedish. W. = Welsh.

- Absolute** (L. *absolutus* = set free, L. *ab* from, *solvere* to loose) = unrestrained, complete. "How *absolute* the knave is" = positive, i.e. free from contradiction. "An *absolute* gentleman" = perfect.
- Adder** (A.S. *nædre*, a snake) = a viper. (*An adder* resulted from a *nadder* by mistake). "Whom I will trust as I will *adders* fanged."
- Aiery** (F. *aire*. Low L. *arca*, a nest of a bird of prey) = an eagle's nest, brood of eagles or hawks. "An *aiery* of children, little eyases."
- Alarm** (It. *All'arme*. L. *ad* to, *illa* those, *arma* arms) = a call to arms. "And as the sleeping soldiers in the *alarm*."
- Alley** (O.F. *alee*, a gallery. F. *aller*, to go) = a passage, a gallery. "The natural gates and *alleys* of the body."
- Anchor, Anchorite or Anchorite** (F. *anchorete*. Gk. *ἀναχωρητής*, (*anachoretēs*), one who retires from the world. Gk. *ἀνά* (*ana*) back, *χωρεῖν* (*chorein*) to withdraw) = a recluse, a hermit. "An *anchor*'s cheer in prison be my scope."
- Anon** (A.S. *on ān*, in a moment) = immediately. "*Anon*, he finds him."
- Antic** (either L. *anticus*, ancient or from It. *antico*, a cavern decorated with grotesque figures) = fantastic. "To put an *antic* disposition on."
- Antique** (L. *antiquus*, ancient) = old, ancient. "I am more an *antique* Roman than a Dane."
- Apparel** (O.F. *apareiller* to dress, *a* to *paraviller* = to put like things with like L. *ad* to, *par* equal) = to clothe, to dress. "The *apparel* oft proclaims the man."
- Approve** (L. *approbare*, to approve) = to prove, to justify. "He may *approve* our eyes."
- Apt** (L. *aptus*, fit) = fit, ready to hand. "Thoughts black, hands *apt*, drugs fit, and time agreeing."
- Argal**. The clown's corruption of the Latin word *ergo* = therefore. "*Argal*, she drowned herself wittingly."
- Argument** (L. *arguere*, to prove by argument, *lit.* to make clear) = subject, especially the plot of a play. "No money hid for *argument*" = plot of a play.
- Arrant** (a variant of "*errant*." L. *errare*, to wander) = knavish, thoroughly bad. "But he's an *arrant* knave."
- Arras**. Tapestry, so named from Arras in Artois, North of France. "Behind the *arras* I'll convey myself."
- Assail** (L. *ad* to, *salire* to leap) = to assault, to attack. "Let us once again *assail* your ears."

- Assay or Essay** (O.F. *essai*, a trial. L. *exagium*, a trial of weight) = an attempt, a trial. "With assays of bias."
- Audit** (L. *auditus*, a hearing; L. *audire*, to hear) = a final account. "And how his *audit* stands, who knows, save heaven."
- Aught** (A.S. *awiht*, one whit or thing) = a thing, any thing. "Whether *ought* to us unknown afflicts him."
- Auspicious** (L. *auspicium*, watching of birds for the purpose of augury L. *avis*, a bird; *spicere*, to spy, to look into) = favourable, betokening good fortune. "With one *auspicious*, and one dropping eye" = cheerful.
- Avouch** (M.E. *avouchen*, to avouch. L. *vocare*, to call) = to warrant. "Without the sensible and true *avouch*." Here, a noun = warrant.
- Ban** (M.E. *ban*, a proclamation, also, to order out, to excommunicate) = proclamation, excommunication, curse. "With Hecate's *ban* thrice blasted" = curse.
- Batten** (to, *batna*, to grow better, recover) = to grow fat, to fatten. "And *batten* on this moor."
- Beaver** (F. *bavière*, a child's bib) = the lower part of the helmet. "He move his *beaver* up."
- Beetle** (A.S. *bitel*, sharp, *bitan*, to bite) = to project over. "That *beetles* o'er its base into the sea."
- Bestow** (A.S. *be*, a prefix; *stōw*, a place) = to pack away. "Where the dead body is *bestowed*."
- Bias** (F. *biais*, a slant, a slope. Low Lat. *bifacem*, one who squints or looks sideways. L. *bi*, double and *facies*, a face) = inclination to one side. "With windlasses, and with assays of *bias*."
- Bilboes** Fetters, named from Bilboa in Spain, famous for iron and steel. "Worse than the mutines in the *bilboes*."
- Bisson** (A.S. *bisen*, blind) = purblind. "With *bisson* rheum," i.e. with blinding tears.
- Blank** (F. *blanc*, white) = a mark, the centre of the target, which was painted white. "As level as the cannon to his *blank*."
- Blazon** (M.E. *blāzen*, to proclaim) = a proclamation. "But this eternal *blazon* must not be" = proclamation of eternity.
- Bodkin** (Diminutive of W. *bidog*, a dagger), originally a small dagger. "With a bare *bodkin*."
- Bodykins** is diminutive of body. "God's bodykins," an oath = By God's body.
- Botch** (M.E. *bocchen*, to strike, repair. From the notion of repairing roughly by hammering) = to patch. "And *botch* the words up fit to their own thoughts."
- Bourn** (F. *borne*, a bound) = a boundary. "From whose *bourn* no traveller returns."

**Broker** (F. *brocour*, an agent: originally a "broacher" or seller of wine. L. *broccus*), an agent, a go between. "They are *brokers*."

**Bruit** (F. *bruit*, a noise) = a rumour, a report. "And the King's rouse the heavens shall *bruit* again" = report loudly.

**Budge** (F. *bouger*, to stir) = to stir. "You shall not *budge*."

**Bulk** (Old Dut. *bulche*, the trunk) = the trunk of the body. "That did seem to shutter all his *bulk*."

**Bulwark** (Dan. *bul*, trunk of a tree; Sw. *verk*, a work). *Lit.* log-work = a barrier formed of logs of wood, then a barrier of any kind. "That it is proof and *bulwark* against sense."

**Button** (F. *bouton*, a bud, a button. O.F. *boter*, to push out) = properly a round knob pushed out. "Too oft before their *buttons* be disclosed."

**Calendar** (L. *Kalendæ*, the first day of the Roman month) = an almanac. Originally, an account book kept by money lenders, so called because interest was due on the first day of each month. "He is the card or *calendar* of gentry."

**Canker** (L. *cancer*, a crab, hence, that which corrodes). "The *canker* (cankerworm) galls the infants of the spring."

**Canon** (A.S. *canon*. L. *canon*, a rule. Gk. *κανών* (*kanon*) a rod, rule. Cane is from Gk. *κάννα* (*kanna*), a straight rod = an ecclesiastical rule. "Or that the Everlasting had not fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter."

**Cap-a-pé** (L. *caput*, head; *ad* to *pes*, the foot) = from head to foot, i.e. completely covering the whole body. "Armed at all points exactly *cap-a-pé*."

**Carbuncle** (L. *carbunculus*, dim. of *carbo*, coal) = (1) a small coal, (2) a gem, from its glowing appearance. "With eyes like *carbuncles*."

**Carouse** (Ger. *garaus*, right out, used of emptying a bumper; *gar*, quite; *aus*; out) = a deep draught. "The queen *carouses* to thy fortune, Hamlet."

**Carp** (M.E. *carpe*, a fish). "Your bait of falsehood takes this *carp* of truth."

**Carriion** (Low L. *caronia*, a carcase. L. *caro*, flesh) = a carcase, putrid flesh. "Being a god kissing *carriion*."

**Cataplasm** (Gk. *κατά πλάσμα* (*cataplasma*), a plaster. *κατά* fully, *πλάσσειν* to spread over = a plaster, a poultice. "No *cataplasm* so rare."

**Cautel** (L. *cavere*, to warn) = deceit. "And no soil nor *cautel* doth besmirch."

**Caviare** (F. *caviar* Turk. *havyâr*, caviare) = the row of a sturgeon "Twas *caviare* to the general."

**Censure** (L. *censura*, opinion; *censere*, to give an opinion) = originally opinion, then, an unfavourable opinion, blame. "Take each man's *censure*, but reserve thy judgment" = opinion.

**Cerement** (L. *cera*, wax with suffix *mentum* = a waxed cloth) = grave clothes. "Have burst their *cerements*."

**Chameleon** (L. *chameleon*. Gk. χαμαιλέον (chamaleon) = a ground lion. χαμαί on the ground, λέων a lion) = a kind of lizard, supposed to feed on the air. "Of the *chameleon's* dish; I eat the air."

**Character** (Gk. χαρακτήρ (*character*), an engraved or stamped mark) = handwriting, character. "You know the hand, 'tis Hamlet's character" = handwriting. "These few precepts see thou *character*" = engrave.

**Chary** (A.S. *cearu*, care) = careful, cautious. "The *chariest* maid is prodigal enough."

**Cheer** (O.F. *chere*, the face. Low L. *cara*, the head. Gk. κάρα, the head) = the mien, the expression of the face, cheerfulness. "So far from *cheer* and your former state" = cheerfulness.

**Choler** (Gk. χολή (chole) bile) = bile, anger. "No, my lord, rather with *choler*."

**Chopine** (It. *cioppino*, a high shoe) = a kind of high shoe worn by boy actors to give the appearance of height. "Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the attitude of a *chopine*."

**Chough** (M.E. *chough*. A.S. *cof*, a bird, so named from cawing) = any chattering bird. "'Tis a *chough*."

**Cicatrice** (L. *cicatrix*, a scar) = the scar left by a wound. "Since yet thy *cicatrice* looks raw and red."

**Clepe** (A.S. *cleopian*, to name) = to call, to name. "They *clepe* us drunkards."

**Clout** (A.S. *clit*, a patch) = a patch. "A *clout* upon his head."

**Columbine** (L. *columbinus*, like a dove; *columba*, a dove) = a plant. "There's fennel for you, and *columbines*."

**Competent** (L. *competere*, to be sufficient for) = sufficient, adequate. "A moiety *competent* was gaged by our king" = a corresponding amount.

**Compost** (L. *compositus*, mixed; *com*, together; *ponere*, to put) = a mixture. "And do not spread the *compost* on the weeds" = manure.

**Condolement** (L. *condolere*, to grieve for) = grief, sorrow for anyone. "To obstinate *condolement*."

**Convoy** (O.F. *convoier*, to convey. Low L. *conviare*, to accompany. L. *con*, with *via* way) = to accompany, to escort. "And *convoy* is assistant." Here = means of conveyance.

- Cope** (M.E. *copen*, to barter, to bargain with) = to vie with, to encounter. "As e'er my conversation *coped* withal."
- Cote** (F. *cotoyer*, to coast along. F. *cote*, rib, slope of a hill, a shore) = to coast alongside, to overtake. "We *coted* them on the way."
- Counterfeit** (F. *contrefaire*, to imitate. L. *contra*, against; *facere*, to make) = to imitate. "The *counterfeit* presentment of two brothers."
- Courtier** (L. *co* (*cum*) together *hortus*, a garden. E. suffix *ier* (*yer*) denoting agent). Court, originally an enclosure, a yard, a royal court or palace. Courtier one of the royal retinue. "Our chiefest *courtier*, cousin and our son."
- Cozen** (F. *cousiner*, to call cousin, to sponge upon) = to call cousin or kinaman for the purpose of sponging upon a person; hence, to beguile, to cheat. "That thus have *cozened* you at hoodman-blind."
- Crants** (Dut. *krans*, a garland) = a garland, a wreath. "Her virgin *crants*."
- Craven** (A.S. *craflan*, to beg earnestly) = to beg for mercy when overcome; hence, a coward. "On some *craven* scruple."
- Credent** (L. *credere*, to believe) = believing, credulous. "If with too *credent* ear you list his songs."
- Crescent** (L. *crescere* (part *crescens*, to grow) = growing. "For nature, *crescent*, does not grow alone."
- Crowner and Coroner** (L. *corona*, a crown) = an officer under the crown. "The *crowner* hath sat on her."
- Cue or Queue** (F. *queue*. L. *cauda*, a tail) = a technical word on the stage. An actor knows when it is his turn to speak when the previous speaker gives him the "cue," i.e. speaks the last words.
- Cunning** (A.S. *cunnen*, to know) = originally, knowledge, skill. "With as much modesty as *cunning*" = skill.
- Dally** (M.E. *dallere*, to play, to trifle) = to trifle. "Laertes, you but *dally*." "The primrose path of *dalliance*" = trifling.
- Delve** (A.S. *delfan*, dig) = to dig. "I will delve one yard below their mines." "Goodman *delver*" = digger.
- Despatched** (O.F. *despecher*. F. *dépêcher*, to hasten. Low L. *despedicare*, to remove hindrances. L. *pedica*, a fetter; *pes*, the foot) = to remove a hindrance; hence, to hasten. "Of life, of crown, of queen, at once *despatched*" = quickly deprived of.
- Dirge** (formerly *dirige*; from the first word of the anthem "*dirige*, Dominus meus" Ps. v. 8, in the office for the dead. L. *dirige* = direct thou) = a funeral anthem. "With mirth in funeral, and with *dirge* in marriage."
- Distil** (L. *distillare*, to drop or trickle down. L. *de* down, *stilla* a drop) = to let fall in drops. "Whilst they, *distilled* almost to jelly with the act of fear" = melted.

**Distilment** (see *Distill*) = what is extracted by distilling. "The leperous distilment."

**Document** (L. *documentum*, a proof. L. *docere*, to teach) = a paper of instructions or proof. "A document in madness" = a lesson, or instruction.

**Dole** (L. *dolere*, to grieve) = grief, lamentation. "Weighing delight and dole."

**Doom** (A.S. *dóm*, a thing set or decided upon) = a judgment, a decision. "With tristful visage, as against the doom."

**Doomsday** (see *Doom*) = the day of doom or judgment. "Was sick almost to doomsday."

**Doublet** (M.E. *dobbelet*. O.F. *doublet* = two-fold) = an inner (double) garment. "With his doublet all unbraced."

**Dout** = to do out, to extinguish. "This folly douts it."

**Ducat** (It. *ducat*, a ducat; also a duchy; named from *ducat* (duchy of Apulia) in the legend upon it) = a coin. "Dead, for a ducat, dead."

**Dungeon** (O.F. *donjon*. L. *dominium*, a lordship. L. *dominus*, a lord) = the chief tower of a castle. Here were the cells in which prisoners were confined; hence, the modern meaning of the word. "In which there are many confines, wards and dungeons."

**Eager** (F. *aigre*. L. *acer* acc. of *acer*, sharp) = sharp, ardent, earnest. "It is a nipping and an eager air" = sharp, biting.

**Ecstasy** (Low L. *ecstasis*, a trance. Gk. *ἐκστασις*, displacement, trance. *ἐκ* (*ek*) out, *στάσις* (*stasis*), a standing) = a state of excessive rapture or enthusiasm. "Blasted with ecstasy." Here = madness.

**Escotted** (O.F. *escotter*, to pay one's share. A.S. *scot* = payment; especially a contribution into a common fund, into which it is shot) = paid. "How are they escotted?"

**Espials** (O.F. *espier*, to spy. L. *spicere*, to look, see) = spies. "Her father and myself lawful espials."

**Excrement** (L. *ex* out of, *crescere*, to grow) = the hair, the beard as growing out of the body. "Your bedded hair, like life in excrements."

**Extravagant** (L. *extra*, beyond; *vagare*, to wander) = wandering beyond, spending more than one's income. "The extravagant and erring spirit," referring to the Ghost wandering beyond the limits assigned to spirits.

**Eyas** (F. *niais*, a nestling) = an unfledged bird, a nestling. "An alery of children, little eyases."

**Fain** (A.S. *fagen*, glad) = glad, gladly. "I would fain prove so."

**Fantasy** (L. *phantasma*. Gk. *φάντασμα*, a vision, spectre; *φαντάζειν*, to display) = an apparition; also imagination of the mind. Horatio says, "'tis but our fantasy" = imagination.

- Fardel** (O.F. *fardel*, dim. of *farde*, a burden. Arab. *fardah*, a package) = a pack, a bundle. "Who would *fardels* bear."
- Fay** (M.E. *fey*, faith) = faith. "For, by my *fay*, I cannot reason."
- Feat** (O.F. *fait*, L. *factum*, a deed) = a deed well done. "Why you proceeded not against these *feats*" = deeds, actions.
- Fee** (A.S. *feoh*, cattle, property) = a grant of land, property, payment. "Gives him these thousand coins in annual *fee*." In early times cattle were the chief part of a man's property, and were used as a medium of exchange.
- Fell** (A.S. *fel*, cruel) = cruel, fierce. "The whiff and wind of his *fell* sword."
- Felly, Fellow** (A.S. *felga*, a felly. So named from the pieces being put together. A.S. *feolan*, to stick, to cleave) = part of a wheel-rim. "Break all her spokes and *fellies* from her wheel."
- Fennel** (M.E. *fenel*, a plant. Dim. of L. *fenum*, hay) = plant. "There's fennel for you."
- Foil** (O.F. *feuille*, a leaf. L. *folium*, a leaf) = a set off, as in setting a gem. The material placed at the back of a jewel to display its lustre to advantage. "I'll be your *foil*, Laertes."
- Foil** (F. *fouler*, to stamp upon) = a weapon with its point blunted for fencing. "Give them the foils, young Osric."
- Fond** (M.E. *fonnen*, to be foolish) = foolish. "All trivial *fond* records."
- Fordo** = destroys. *For* has a negative force. "Whose violent property *for*-does itself."
- Forfeit** (O.F. *forfeit*, a crime, punishable by fine. Low L. *forisfactum* a trespass, a fine. L. *foris* (out of doors) *facere*, to do, i.e. to do beyond, to trespass) = penalty or fine for a misdeed. Also something lost by the misdeed. "Did *forfeit*, with his life, all these his lands."
- Fret** (1) (A.S. *fretan*, to eat away) = to eat away, to worry.  
(2) A.S. *frætedan*, to adorn) = to adorn or ornament. "This majestical roof *fretted* with golden fire."
- Fust or Fusty** (O.F. *fusté*, tasting of the cask. O.F. *fuste*, a cask; originally, a stock, a log. L. *fustis*, a cudgel, a thick stick) = to become mouldy. "To *fust* in us unused."
- Gage** (F. *gage*, a pledge. Low L. *radium*, a pledge. L. *vas*) = a pledge. As a verb = to pledge. "Was *gaged* by our king."
- Gambol** (It. *gamba*, the leg. F. *gambe*) = a frisk, caper, frolicsome dance. "Which madness, would *gambol* from" = skip away.
- Gibe** (Sw. *giba*, to gape) = to jeer. "Where be your *gibes* now" = your jeers.
- Gore** (A.S. *gor*, filth, dirt) = clotted blood. "O'ersized with coagum<sup>me</sup> *gore*."
- Gorge** (O.F. *gorge*, the throat) = the throat. "My *gorge* rises at it." Here = stomach, i.e. I feel sick at it.

**Gross** (F. *grosse*, gross, great. L. *grossa*, fat, thick) = great. "In the gross and scope of my opinion" = in the sum total.

**Gules** (F. *gueules*, red. L. *gula*, throat). A term in heraldry = red. Probably from the colour of the open mouth of the heraldic lion. "Now is he total *gules*" = red, bloody.

**Harbinger** (M.E. *herbergeour*, one who provides lodgings for a man of rank. O.F. *herberge*, a lodging) = a forerunner. "As *harbingers* preceding still the fates."

**Havoc** (O.F. *havoc*, plunder; O.F. *haver*, to hook up) = destruction; indiscriminate slaughter. "This quarry cries on *havoc*."

**Hearse** (M.E. *herse*; O.F. *herce*, a harrow. L. *hirpen*) = (1) a harrow; (2) a frame like a harrow for supporting lights at a church service, especially a funeral; (3) a funeral pageant; (4) a monument; (5) a bier or carriage for a dead body. "Why thy canonized bones, *hearsed* in death" = entombed.

**Hectic** (Gk. *ἐκτικός* (*hecticos*), habitual = continual; applied to the constant bright spot that appears on the cheek during fever. "For like the *hectic* in my blood he rages" = fever.

**Husbandry** (to. *hūsbonde*, the master of the house; *hūs*, house; *biandi*, dwelling in) = the providing for the house. "Borrowing dulls the edge of *husbandry*" Here = thrift.

**Indentures** (L. *indentare*, to notch. L. *in* in *dens*, a tooth), a legal term. Agreements were made in duplicate and were indented along the edges to fit one another.

**Inoculate** (L. *inoculare*, to insert a graft; *in*, into; *oculus*, an eye) = to graft, to bud. "For virtue cannot so *inoculate* our old stock."

**Jot** (The English form of L. *iota*, Gk. *ἰōτα*, the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet, or from *yod* the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet) = a point, a little, the least quantity imaginable. "Not a *jot* more my lord."

**Jowl, Jole** (M.E. *jolle*, the cheek) = the jaw or cheek. "How the knave *jowls* it to the ground." Here a verb = to knock the *jole* or head. The modern word is "*jolt*."

**Juggle** (O.F. *jogleor*. F. *jongleur*. L. *joculator*, a jester; *joculus*, dim. of *jocus*, a jest) = to play tricks and amuse by sleight of hand; to practice artifice or imposture. "I'll not be *juggled* with" = deceived by a trick.

**Kibe** (W. *cibrost*, chilblain; W. *cip*, a cup, i.e. a cup like malady, taking the name from the rounded form) = a chilblain. "He galls his *kibe*."

**Kind** (A.S. *cyn*, kin, race) = of the same race. "A little more than *kin* and less than kind."

**Kind** (A.S. *cynde*, natural) = of the same nature. "A little more than *kin* and less than *kind*."

**Let** (A.S. *lettan*, to make late) = to hinder. "I'll make a ghost of him that *lets* me."



**Lief** (A.S. *leof*, dear) = gladly, willingly. "I had as *lief* the town-crier spoke my lines."

**Liege** (O.H.G. *ledic*, free, especially from all obligations of service). Originally "a *liege* lord" was a lord of a free band, and his *lieges* were privileged free men, faithful to him, but free from all other services. The modern meaning "bound by feudal tenure" has arisen by confusion with *L. ligatus*, bound. "And *liegemen* to the Dane."

**List** (1) (O.F. *lisse* or *lice*, a barrier. *L. licia*, a girdle, barriers) = barriers enclosing a piece of ground. "The ocean, overpowering of his *list*."

(2) (F. *liste*, a roll) = a catalogue, a muster roll. "Sharked up a *list* of lawless resolute."

(3) (A.S. *hlýstan*, to listen) = to listen. "If with too credent earyou *list* his songs."

(4) (A.S. *lysian*, to desire) = to desire, to please. "If we *list* to speak."

**Livery** (M.E. *livere*. F. *livrée* = a thing given. *L. liberare* to set free, give freely) = a delivery, a thing delivered, uniform allowed to servants. "The light and careless *livery* that it wears."

**Lug** (Swd. *lugga*, to pull by the hair) = to drag. "I'll *lug* the guts into the neighbour room."

**Mart**, shortened form of market. (*L. mercatus*, traffic) = trade, a place where trade is carried on. "And foreign *mart* for implements of war."

**Mass** (M.E. *messe*; *L. missus*, p. part of *mittere*, to send) = the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Usually said to be derived from the sentence, *ite missa est* (go, the congregation is dismissed) said at the end of the service). "Mass, I cannot tell."

**Matin** (F. *matin*, morning. *L. matutinus*, belonging to the morning) = the morning. "The glow-worm shows the *matin* to be near."

**Mazzard** (Supposed to be derived from *mazer* or *meser*, a bowl. The skull being smooth and round like a bowl) = the head, the skull. "Knocked about the *mazzard* with a sexton's spade."

**Moiety** (F. *moitié*, a half. *L. medius*, middle) = a half share. "A *moiety* competent." Here = share; any portion, not necessarily the half.

**Moult** (*L. mutare*, to change) = to cast feathers as birds. "Your secrecy to the King and Queen *moult* no feather."

**Mountebank** (Lit. one who *mounts a bench* to proclaim his nostrums. It. *montrare*, to mount in on *banco* a bench) = a quack doctor. "I bought an unction of a *mountebank*."

**Mow** (F. *moue*, a mow or mouth) = a grimace. "Those that would make *mows* at him."

**Nickname** (M.E. *neke-name*. An *ekename*, corrupted into a *nekename*, *eke*, to augment. *L. ag-nomen*) = an additional name. "And *nickname* God's creatures." Here = to misname i.e. to give wrong names to.

**Niggard** (M.E. *nigard*. Ic. *knoggr*, stingy) = miserly, stingy. "*Niggard* of question," i.e. not putting many questions.

**Nonce** (M.E. *for then anes* = for the once) = for the occasion. "A chalice for the *nonce*."

**Obsequies** (L. *obsequias*, acc. of *obsequi*, funeral rites, *lit.* followings. *l.* *obsequi*, to follow near). "Her *obsequies* have been as far enlarged"

**Obsequious** (L. *obsequiosus*, full of compliance; *obsequi*, to follow near, to comply with) = very complying. "To do *obsequious* sorrow."

**Orisons** (O.F. *orison*. L. *orationem*, acc. of *oratio*, a prayer; *orare*, to pray) = prayers. "Nymph, in thy *orisons*, be all my sins remembered."

**Pander, Pandar** (From *Pandarus*, the name of the man who procured for Troilus the love of Chryseis (Oressida) = a procurer. "And reason *panders* will."

**Pansy** (F. *pensée*, a thought. It is the flower of thought or remembrance). A flower, also called heart's-ease. "And there is *pansies*, that's for thoughts."

**Paragon** (F. *paragon*, a model of excellence. It owes its origin to two prepositions united in one phrase, *para*, in comparison, *con* with) = a model of perfection. "The *paragon* of animals."

**Partisan or Partizan** (O.H.G. *partā*, a battle axe) = a halbert, a battle axe. "Shall I strike at it with my *partisan*."

**Peasant** (F. *pays*, a country, with suffix *an*. L. *pagus*, a village) = a rustic, a villager. "O, what a rogue and *peasant* slave I am."

**Perpend** (F. *per*, thoroughly. L. *pendere*, to weigh) = to consider thoroughly. "*I* *perpend*, I have a daughter," etc.

**Peruse** (L. *per*, thoroughly; *usus* past part. *utor*, to use) = to use up, to go through thoroughly, to examine thoroughly, to read over carefully. "He falls to such *perusal* of my face."

**Pester** (O.F. *empestrer*, to entangle, incumber. Originally, "to hobble a horse at pasture." Low L. *in* upon, *pastorium*, a clog for a horse at pasture. L. *pastus*, perf. part; *pascere*, to feed) = to trouble, to annoy. "To *pester* us with message."

**Petard** (F. *petard*, an explosive) = an explosive machine made of metal, formerly used for blowing open gates of fortresses. "To have the engineer hoist with his own *petard*."

**Pioneer** (F. *pionnier*, an extension of F. *pion*, a foot-soldier) = a soldier who clears the way before an army, especially applied to sappers and miners. "Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast? A worthy *pioneer*."

**Planet** (Gk. *πλανήτης* (*planetes*), a wanderer) = the wandering stars or planets. "The nights are wholesome; then the *planets* strike."

**Poniard** (F. *poignard*, a dagger. O.F. *poign*, the fist, with the suffix *ard*. L. *pugnis*, the fist) = a dagger. "Six French rapiers and *poniards*."

- Porcupine or Porpentine** (L. *porcus*, a pig; *spina*, a thorn) = the prickly pig. "Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."
- Posset** (M.E. *posset*, W. *posel*, curdled milk) = a warm curdled drink. "It doth posset and curd," i.e. it curdles.
- Posy** short for **Poesy** (Gk. *ποίησις*, *poësis*, a composition, a poem) = a short poem, especially a short motto in verse, on Knives and Rings. "Is this a prologue, or the *posy* of a ring."
- Prevent** (L. *præ* before, *venire* to go). The old meaning was "to go before, to anticipate." "So shall my anticipation *prevent* your discovery."
- Pursy** (O.F. *poulser*, to gasp for breath) = short-winded. "For in the fatness of these *pursy* times."
- Quaintly** (O.F. *coint*, neat, fine. L. *cognitus*, known) = neatly, oddly, fantastically (taking this meaning from confusion with. L. *comptus*, *comere*, to adorn). "But breathe his faults so *quaintly*" = ingeniously.
- Quarry** (M.E. *querre*. O.F. *cuirce*, the intestines of a slain animal, the part given to the hounds; so called because wrapped in the skin. F. *cuir*. L. *corium*, the skin) = (1) a heap of slaughtered game, (2) the animal pursued. "This *quarry* cries on havoc."
- Quiddity or Quiddit** (L. *quidditas*, the nature of a thing) = a nicety, a cavil, a subtle distinction. "Where be his *quiddits* now?"
- Quietus** (L. *quies*, rest) = a final discharge or acquittance. "When he himself might his *quietus* make."
- Quillet** (Short for L. *quidlibet*, anything you choose) = a sly trick in argument. "Where be his quiddits now, his *quilletts*, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?"
- Quintessence** (L. *quinta*, *essentia*, the fifth essence). *Lit.* the fifth essence = pure essence (see p. 136). "What is this *quintessence* of dust."
- Quote** (O.F. *quoter*, *coter*, to quote. L. *quotare*, to mark off in chapters and verses. L. *quotus*, how many) = to give a reference. "I had not *quoted* him" = observed in order to describe him."
- Rack** (M.E. *rak* = drift, motion, a thing drifted) = a cloud. "A silence in the heavens, the *rack* stood still."
- Rapier** (F. *rapiere*, a Spanish sword. A name given in contempt = *raspiere*, rasper or poker) = a light narrow sword used for thrusting. "He whips his *rapier* out."
- Raze** (L. *radere*, *rasum*, to scrape) = to demolish entirely. "Provincial roses on my *razed* shoes" = slashed (see p. 142).
- Reck** (A.S. *recan*, to care) = to care for, regard. "And *recks* not his own rede."
- Rede** (A.S. *roed*, counsel) = advice. "And *recks* not his own *rede*."
- Reechy** (A.S. *hræcan*, to try to vomit) = begrimed, foul. "A pair of *reechy* kisser."

- Requiem** (L. *requiem*, acc. of *requies*, rest). The mass for the dead; called *requiem* because it began. "Requiem eternam dona eis" = grant eternal repose to those, etc. "To sing a *requiem*."
- Rival** (L. *rivus*, a stream. Originally meant dwellers by the same river. Contentions as to water rights led to the modern meaning) = a competitor. "The *rivals* of my watch" = partners.
- Romage or Rummage** (A.S. *rum*, a place, with suffix, *age* = stowage). Used in this play in the nautical sense of "clearing a ship's hold," and so = bustle and confusion. "Of this post haste and *romage* in the land."
- Rood** (A.S. *rod*, a gallowz, a cross, properly, a rod or pole) = the cross. "No, by the *rood*, not so."
- Rouse** (Dan. *ruus*, intoxication) = a drinking-bout. "And the king's *rouse* the heaven shall bruit again."
- Russet** (F. *rousset*, dim. of *roux*, red) = reddish, reddish brown. "In *russet* mantle clad."
- Rusty** (A.S. *rust*, rust; originally, redness) = covered with rust. "Do they grow *rusty*."
- Satyr** (Gk. *σάτυρος*, a satyr, a sylvan god, i.e. part man, part god). "Hyperion to a *satyr*."
- Saw** (A.S. *sagu*, a saying) = a saying, a maxim. All *saws* of books."
- Scan** (Short for *scand*. L. *scandere*, to climb; also to scan a verse) = to examine closely. "That would be *scanned*," i.e. must be inquired into.
- Sconce** (O. Dut. *schantse*, a fortress. O.F. *esconcer*, to hide or cover. L. *absconsus*, used as a perf. part. of *abscondere*, to hide) = a small fort, bulwark. Also applied to a helmet, and even to the head. "To knock him about the *sconce* with a dirty shovel."
- Scrimers** (F. *escrimeur*, a fencer). "The *scrimers* of their nation," i.e. fencers.
- Scullion** (O.F. *escouillon*, a dish-clout) = a kitchen servant. "And fall a cursing, like a very drab, a *scullion*."
- Secure** (L. *securus*, free from anxiety, *se* without, *cura* anxiety) = free from anxiety. "Heaven *secure* him" = protect.
- Shard** (A.S. *sceard*, a fragment. *Lit.* "a cut thing." A.S. *sceran*, to shear) = a fragment. "*Shards*, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her."
- Sheen** (A.S. *scéne*, fair, showy) = brightness, splendour. "And thirty dozen moons with borrowed *sheen*."
- Shent** (A.S. Past part. of *scendan*, to put to shame) = put to shame, harshly reprov'd. "How in my words soever she be *shent*."
- Shrive or Shrieve** (A.S. *scrijan*, to shrive, to impose a penance. L. *scribere*, to write). *Lit.* to impose a penance in writing. There were three parts—(1) the confession of the penitent, (2) the penance imposed, (3) the absolution pronounced. "Not *shriving-time* allowed."

- Skirt** (M.E. *skyrt*, a skirt, a kind of kirtle) = *noun*, the lower loose part of a dress; *verb*, to border, to be on the border. "Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there, sharked up a list of lawless resolute."
- Sliver** (M.E. *sliver*, dimin. of *slive*, a slice, a chip. A.S. *slifan*, to cleave) = a splinter, a twig. "Clambering to hang, an envious *sliver* broke."
- Soil** (O.F. *souiller*, to soil, to wallow as a sow. L. *sus*, a sow) = to defile. "A thing a little *soiled* i' the working."
- Sovereign** (O.F. *soverain*, princely, chief. Low L. *superanus*, chief. L. *super*, above) = a chief, a monarch. "By the *sovereign* power you have over us" = the power of a monarch over his subjects.
- Springe** (A.S. *springan*, to spring) = a snare made with a flexible (springing) rod. Ay, *springes* to catch woodcocks."
- Spurn** (M.E. *spurnen*, to kick against) = to reject; kick against. "*Spurns* enviously at straws."
- Stalk** (M.E. *stalken*. A.S. *stalcan*, to walk warily) = to stride. "See it *stalks* away."
- Sterling** (M.E. *sterling*, a sterling coin of standard size and weight; named from the *Easterlings* (i.e. the men of the East); this was the name for the Hanse merchants in London) = of standard worth, genuine. "That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay, which are not *sterling*."
- Stithy** (M.E. *stith*, an anvil. A.S. *stede*, a place, a fixed place; so named from its firmness) = a smithy, a blacksmith's shop. "As foul as Vulcan's *stithy*."
- Sully** (A.S. *sylian*, to sully, defile) = to tarnish, to spot. "You laying these slight *sullies* on my son" = defects.
- Synod** (F. *synode*. Gk. *σύνωδος* (*synodos*), a coming together, a meeting) = an assembly, especially ecclesiastical. "All you gods, in general *synod* take away her power."
- Target** (Dimin. of A.S. *targe*, a shield) = a small shield. "The adventurous knight shall use his foil and *target*."
- Tarre** (A.S. *tyrgan*, to imitate) = to urge on, incite, like setting on dogs. "To *tarre* them to controversy."
- Tell** (A.S. *telan*, to count) = to count, to number. The word remains in the "tellers," who count the votes in a division in Parliament. "While one with moderate haste might *tell* a hundred."
- Tether** (Formerly written *tedder*, M.E. *tedir*. Gael. *taod*, a halter) = a rope for fastening up. "And with a larger *tether* may he walk."
- Tropically** (Gk. *τροπικός* (*tropicos*), belonging to a turn, *τρόπος* a turn) = figuratively, i.e. by turning aside a word from its original meaning. "Marry, how? *Tropically*."
- Truant** (F. *truand*, a beggar) = an idler. "A *truant* disposition, good, my lord"
- Truncheon** (M.E. *truncheon*, a little stick. Dim. of *trone*, a trunk) = a staff of office. "Within his *truncheon*'s length."

**Unaneled** (A.S. *ele*, oil. L. *oleum*, oil. Lit. *un-on-oiled*, i.e. not oiled upon) = without having received extreme unction. "Unhouselled, disappointed, *unaneled*."

**Unhouselled** (A.S. *housel*, to sacrifice) = without having received the Sacrament. "Unhouselled, disappointed, *unaneled*."

**Union** (L. *unio*, oneness, also a single pearl of large eye) = a large pearl. "And in the cup an *union* shall he throw."

**Vail** (O.F. *avalen*, to let fall down) = to lower. "Do not, for ever, with thy *vailed* lids."

**Valanced** (From *Valence* in France, near Lyons, famous for oaths) = a kind of drapery, now applied to a part of the bed-hangings. "Thy face is *valanced*, since I saw thee last" = fringed with a beard.

**Ventages** (F. *vent*. L. *ventus*, wind) = an air-hole. Govern these *ventages* with your finger and thumb."

**Vulgar** (L. *vulgus*, the common people) = belonging to the common people. "As any the most *vulgar* thing to sense" = common.

**Yaw** (Norwegian *gaga* to bend backwards) = to go unsteadily as a ship. "And yet but *yaw* neither in respect of his quick sail."

**Yawn** (A.S. *ginnan*, to gape) = to gape, to open widely. "When churchyards *yawn*."

**Yeoman** (O. Frisian *geoman*, a villager, *ga* a village) = dweller in a village. The yeoman soldiers were drawn from small farmers and villagers. "*Yeoman's* service," i.e. right trusty service.

**Wan** (M.E. *wan*, colourless) now applied to pale objects deficient in colour. "All his visage *wanned* = become pale."

**Wanton** (M.E. prefix *wan*, lacking. A.S. *towen*, educated) = unrestrained. "Such *wanton* wild and usual slips."

**Wassail** (A.S. *wes hál*. Lit. be whole; a form of wishing your health) = revelry: originally a drinking of the health. "Keeps *wassail*, and the swaggering up-spring reels."

**Weeds** (A.S. *waed*, a garment) = garments, especially mourning garments. "Than settled age his sable and his *weeds*."

**Wharf** (A.S. *wherfe*, a dam or bank) = a place for landing goods; bank of a river. "That rots itself in ease on Lethe *wharf*."

**Windlasses** (Put for *wind-lace*, a winding course, from *wind* to turn, *lace*, a snare, a twisted string) = a circuit. "With *windlasses* and with assays of bias" = roundabout ways.

Windlass, a machine with a turning handle is a corruption of *windas* i.e. *windáss*, a windlass. i.e. *winda*, to wind; *áss*, a rounded beam or pole).

**Withers** (A.S. *wither*, against, *withre*, resistance) = the ridge between the shoulder blades of a horse. So called because it is the part which a horse opposes to the strain, or on which the stress of the collar comes in drawing. "Let the galled jade wince, our *withers* are unwrung."

**Wit** (A.S. *wit*, knowledge) = wisdom, knowledge. "Brevity is the soul of *wit*."

**Wont** (The part. of *won*, to dwell, remain. A.S. *wuna*, custom, use) = used, accustomed. "Wherein the spirit held his *wont* to walk."

# QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT EXAMINATIONS

## ACT I. SCENE I.

1. What part do Marcellus and Francisco take in the play?
2. Describe (by quotations) the appearance, dress, and features of the Ghost.
3. What was the state of the kingdom at the period of the opening of the play?
4. Write out passage commencing  
"In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
*to*  
Our climatures and countrymen" (113-125).
5. Paraphrase:—  
*to* "I have heard  
Made probation" (149-156).
6. Mention any superstitious beliefs referred to in this scene.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

1. How does Claudius endeavour to justify his marriage with the Queen?
2. What contrasts in the play does Hamlet draw between his father and his uncle?
3. Quote Hamlet's enumeration of the ordinary signs of woe.
4. Write out the passage commencing  
"O that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
*to*  
Let me not think on't" (129-146).
5. Paraphrase:—  
*to* "A figure like your father.  
Stand dumb, and speak not to him" (199-206).
6. What caused Fortinbras to choose the opportunity for attacking Denmark?

## ACT I. SCENE III.

1. Give the sources of the play, and the story as told in the original legend.
2. What differences are there in the story as told in the ancient records?
3. What view does Laertes take of Hamlet's favour to Ophelia? What advice does he give her? How do subsequent events justify or condemn the warning?
4. Quote the precepts of Polonius to Laertes, tabulating them under the following heads. (1) general conduct, (2) friendship, (3) quarrels, (4) dress, (5) loans.
5. Paraphrase :—  
    *to* "In few, Ophelia,  
        The better to beguile" (126-131).
6. What impression do you receive from this scene of Ophelia's character?

## ACT I. SCENE IV.

1. Show from the play that when Hamlet is excited he is capable of independent action.
2. Write out the passage :—  
    *to* "It is a custom,  
        To his own scandal" (15-38).
3. Paraphrase :—  
    *to* "What if it tempt you,  
        And hears it roar beneath" (69-78).
4. "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." Justify the statement. Who was the speaker?
5. How does Hamlet address the Ghost? How does the Ghost reply in this scene?



## ACT I. SCENE V.

1. What was the general idea of the late king's death?
2. Quote the Ghost's account of his murder.
3. What was Hamlet's object in feigning madness?
4. What lines in this scene does Goethe refer to as giving the keynote of Hamlet's action?
5. Explain the context of the following passages :
  - (i) "I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres."
  - (ii) "meet it is I set it down,  
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;  
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark";
  - (iii) "The glow-worm shows the matin to be near;  
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire."

## ACT II. SCENE I.

1. Who is Reynaldo? What part does he take in the play?
2. Mention any anachronisms in the play. What is an anachronism?
3. What conclusions would you draw as to the character of Polonius in this scene?
4. Paraphrase :—  
 to "Look you, sir,  
 And, in part, him" (6-15).
5. "This is the very ecstasy of love." What actions on the part of Hamlet cause Polonius to make this comment?
6. "Wherefore should you do this?" Who puts this question, and what answer is given?

## ACT II. SCENE II.

1. What part in the plot against Hamlet is taken by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? With what success?
2. Describe in the words of Polonius the gradual decline of Hamlet "into the madness wherein he now raves." How did Polonius propose to test his theory?
3. Who is Voltmand? Give a short summary of his message.
4. What are Hamlet's views on ambition?
5. Give an account (1) of the conversation between Hamlet and Polonius in the lobby; (2) of the meeting between Hamlet, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
6. What new sides to Hamlet's character come out in this scene?
7. Paraphrase:—  
"Nay, their endeavour  
to  
Scarce come thither" (339-345).

## ACT III. SCENE I.

1. Write out passage commencing  
"To be, or not to be,  
to  
And lose the name of action" (53-85).  
What is the theme upon which Hamlet meditates in this soliloquy?
2. What report do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern make to the King on the subject of Hamlet's eccentric behaviour? What questions are put to them (1) by the King, (2) by the Queen?
3. What fresh contrivance is arranged for discovering the cause of Hamlet's distraction?
4. Describe the scene between Hamlet and Ophelia following the soliloquy in question 1.
5. Account for Hamlet's strange behaviour to Ophelia.
6. Write out in your own words, bringing out the meaning clearly and concisely, the passage beginning:  
"O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
to  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!" (148-159).

**ACT III. SCENE II.**

1. Give Hamlet's description of Horatio.
2. Where is the scene of the play? Give the duration of the play and the seasons of the year.
3. Give the substance of Hamlet's instructions to the players.
4. What reasons can be given for considering the madness of Hamlet to be real?
5. What do we learn from the play about the stage in Shakespeare's time?
6. Write out the passage beginning :—  
    *to*            "The great man down,  
                 Seasons him his enemy" (191-196).

**ACT III. SCENE III.**

1. Paraphrase :—  
    *to*            "The single and peculiar,  
                 Attends the boisterous ruin" (11-22).
2. What thoughts does the King give utterance to on (1) mercy, (2) prayer, (3) repentance?
3. What reasons does Hamlet give for not putting the King to death when at prayer? Comment upon the same.
4. Describe the King's character. If you were taking his part in a play, what characteristics would you aim at bringing out most markedly?
5. Write out the passage, being careful of the division of lines, beginning :  
    *to*            "Oh, my offence is rank,  
                 To wash it white as snow" (36-46).

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

1. In the scene between Hamlet and the Queen, describe (a) the death of Polonius, (b) the reappearing of the Ghost.
2. What effect have Hamlet's upbraidings on the Queen?
3. Reproduce in the words of Shakespeare the pictures of the present and the late King as described by Hamlet.
4. What epithets during the play does Hamlet bestow upon Polonius? Is he justified in his descriptions?
5. In what words does Hamlet maintain his own sanity?
6. Paraphrase:—

"Heaven's face doth glow,  
*to* Is thought-sick at the act" (48-51);  
*also*  
*to* "Sense, sure, you have,  
*to* Could not so mope" (71-81).

## ACT IV. SCENES I, II, III, IV.

1. What comment does the King make upon the death of Polonius, and what course of action does he decide upon?
2. Why was the King unable to get rid of Hamlet by direct means?
3. What reference is made to England in the play? What conclusion can you draw from it as to the date of the events related in the play?
4. Illustrate the character of Fortinbras from the play. Contrast him with Hamlet. How does Hamlet contrast Fortinbras with himself?
5. Write out the passage beginning:  
"What is a man,  
*to* To fust in us unused."
6. Give the substance of Hamlet's views on his own behaviour up to this point. Can you account for it?

## ACT IV. SCENE V.

1. With regard to Ophelia's madness, (1) Give indications of her insanity; (2) Note the principal points of difference between her state and Hamlet's assumed madness; (3) Upon what subjects do her thoughts run? (4) What was the cause of her madness?
2. "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions." What are these "sorrows" as enumerated by the King?
3. What reasons have you for thinking that the madness of Hamlet was assumed?
4. What has Laertes returned for? Discuss his character.
5. Write out Ophelia's song about St. Valentine's day.
6. If you were acting the part of Ophelia, how would you behave in this scene?

## ACT IV. SCENE VI, VII.

1. Give the substance of Hamlet's letter to Horatio.
2. "Of them I have much to tell thee." To whom does Hamlet refer? When does he give the explanation to Horatio, and what did he tell him?
3. Who was Lamond? What mention is made of him?
4. Write out the passage describing the death of Ophelia, beginning  
"There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
to  
To muddy death" (165-182).
5. Describe the details of the King's device for bringing about Hamlet's death. What light do these throw on both the King's and Laertes' characters?
6. By whom, to whom and in what connection were the following passages spoken?
  - (i) "You must not think  
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,  
That we can let our beard be shook with danger  
And think it pastime."
  - (ii) "But that I know love is begun by time;  
And that I see, in passages of proof,  
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it."
  - (iii) "There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious slyver broke";

## ACT V. SCENE I.

1. At what point in the play does Hamlet cease to feign madness?
2. Give instances of the Clowns or Gravediggers using words conveying the opposite meaning to that intended.
3. What allusions are made in this scene to Hamlet's age and to England?
4. Professor Dowden has said, "There is in Hamlet a terrible power of sudden and desperate action." Illustrate this from the play.
5. If you were producing this play, what stage effects would you aim at emphasizing?
6. Quote the lines beginning, "Alas, poor Yorick!" and ending "make her laugh at that."
7. Describe the entrance of the funeral procession.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

1. Illustrate with quotations the quickness of Hamlet's brain in his conversation with Osiric. What affectations of his time does Shakespeare satirise in the latter's character?
2. What were the terms of the wager? What were the stakes?
3. What conversation took place between Hamlet and Laertes previous to the duel?
4. What were the stratagems of the King and Laertes for the destruction of Hamlet? How did they fail?
5. Describe the conduct of the Queen during the duel.
6. Quote the dying words of Laertes.
7. What was Hamlet's dying charge to Horatio, and what rôle did he appoint to Fortinbras?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS.

1. Discuss the character of Polonius, illustrating, if you can, by quotations.
2. What part is played in the drama by Laertes?
3. Hamlet is alternatively irresolute and passionate. Give instances of both moods, and try to account for them.
4. Describe and explain Hamlet's treatment of : (a) his mother : (b) Ophelia.
5. How do you account for Hamlet's procrastination in taking vengeance on his father's murderer?
6. Contrast the character of Hamlet with that of Horatio. Describe and account for the relationship between them.
7. Write a short sketch of the character of Ophelia.
8. "There is no play that suffers so much in being transferred to the stage." Discuss this statement.
9. Answer briefly the questions below each of the following passages :

- (i) "I find thee apt;  
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed  
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Would'st thou not stir in this."

- (a) Who speaks these words and on what occasion?
- (b) What is the matter he refers to?
- (c) How far does the bearer prove in the end that he is "apt"?

- (ii) "Love! his affections do not that way tend;  
Nor what he spake, though it lack form a little,  
Was not like madness."

- (a) Who speaks these words and to whom?
- (b) Is the speaker right in his opinion?
- (c) What is *your* opinion of this "madness"?

- (iii) "Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great argument,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honour's at the stake."

- (i) Who speaks these words and on what occasion?
- (ii) What was the argument that led up to this statement?
- (iii) How far does it reflect the speaker's own actions?

10. "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." Discuss this statement from Hamlet's point of view.
11. Outline the part taken by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in the play. What is your opinion of their deaths?
12. If you were given the part of Hamlet's uncle in the play, what points of character and behaviour would you emphasize?
13. Explain and give the context of the following passages :
- (i) "Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar."
- (ii) "He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;  
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,  
Confound the ignorant";
- (iii) "She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
I could not but by her."
14. Write out one of the following passages, being especially careful of the division of lines, from
- (a) "O, that this too too solid flesh should melt,  
to Possess it merely." (I. ii. 129-137).
- (b) "Thus was I, sleeping by a brother's hand  
to A couch for luxury and damned incest"  
(I. v. 58-67).
- (c) "What is a man,  
to Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,  
to do't." (IV. iv. 33-46).
15. Describe Hamlet as you think he would have appeared had he lived in prosperity.

*Further questions, with answers, will be found in HAMLET in the Dinglewood Series of Questions and Notes, price 1/6, and in the Supplement, price 9d., by Stanley Wood, M.A.*